Abstract Proceedings of the Travancore Legislative Council.

ABSTRACT PROCEEDINGS OF THE TRAVANCORE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

The Council met in the Dewan's room, Public Offices, at 12 Noon, on the 15th September 1914/30th Chingam 1090.

Present.

M. KRISHNAN NAIR, ESQ., B. A. & B. L., DEWAN.....*Presiding.*
V. Subba Iyer Esq., B. A. & B. L.
N. Subrahmanya Iyer Esq., M. A.
P. Kuruvila Varkki Esq.
R. Mahadeva Iyer Esq., B. A.
K. V. Rengaswami Iyengar Esq., M. A.
N. Raman Pillai Esq., B. A.
John Kuriyan Esq., B. A., B. C. E.
P. K. Kesava Pillai Esq., B. A. & B. L.
J. A. Richardson Esq.
K. Parameswaran Pillai Esq., B. A. & B. L.
K. G. Sesha Iyer Esq., B. A. & B. L.
C. P. Thomas Esq., B. A. & L. T.
K. G. Parameswara Menon Esq., B. A. & B. L.
A. M. Kumara Pillai Esq., B. A. & B. L.

K. Narayanan Pandalay Esq., B. A. & B. L.....*Secretary.*

The Secretary reported to the Council that the Land Acquisition Regulation Amendment Bill, the Game Preservation Regulation Amendment Bill and the Village Panchayat Courts Bill, finally passed by the Council on the 10th June 1914, received the assent of His Highness the Maha Raja on the 10th July, the 10th August and the 11th September 1914, respectively, and they became law as Regulations XI and XII of 1089 and I of 1090.

The Secretary also reported that Messrs. N. Raman Pillai, B. A., and John Kuriyan, B. A., B. E., who had been appointed Official Members took their seats in Council that day.

THE ELEMENTARY EDUCATION BILL.

Mr. P. K. Kesava Pillai, in introducing the Elementary Education Bill, spoke as follows :—

Availing myself of the kind permission I got from this Council about 2 years ago to introduce a Bill to make better provision for the extension of Elementary Education in the State, I have framed the present Bill. The Bill evinces a genuine desire to avoid all haste and precipitancy, and only a small and modest attempt has been made to make Elementary Education compulsory. The Bill is also purely of a permissive character. In preparing this Bill, I have also duly considered the local conditions and consulted the opinions of gentlemen who, by their long experience in the Education Department, their culture and their position, are fully competent to express an opinion on the subject.

The Bill, as it is, consists of fourteen Sections. The first Section makes the Bill applicable to the whole of Travancore, leaving to the Government the discretion to select the areas in which it should be introduced. The provisions of this Bill are, therefore, to be enforced only in such areas as are chosen by the Government for the purpose. Section 2 deals with definitions. With a view to see that the child's education is attended to under all circumstances, "Parent" has been so defined as to include guardians and every person liable to maintain or having the actual custody of the child. "Elementary Education" has been so defined as to mean only the course of instruction imparted in the Lower Grade Elementary Schools of our State. Section 3 imposes a legal obligation on every parent, residing in areas where the proposed law is made applicable, to send the child to receive Elementary Education in a recognised Elementary School for a period of 4 years between the ages of 6 and 10. Section 4 provides satisfactory safeguards against what may be regarded as hard and vexatious enforcement of the provisions of the Bill. Some of the important circumstances under which a parent is exempted from the operation of Section 3 are enumerated here. The Section itself by no means professes to be exhaustive; and further, Section 14 has been so worded as to confer upon the Government the power to make Rules for providing, as occasions demand, exemptions other than those specifically mentioned in Section 4, if necessity is felt for the same. With a view to see that the provisions of this Section relating to excuses for non-attendance may not be abused, the Section further requires, in all cases of exemption, a certificate from the School Attendance Committee—a Committee to be appointed to carry out the provisions of this Regulation.

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The religious sentiments of the people are respected in Section 5, and Section 6 prohibits generally the employment of boys between the ages of 6 & 10 who are not receiving Elementary Education in a recognised school or have not been duly exempted under Section 6.

Section 7 provides for the appointment of one or more School Attendance Committees by the Government to secure the attendance of boys in areas where this Regulation may be introduced.

Sections 8 to 12 deal generally with the proceedings to be taken for the enforcement of the provisions of this Regulation and with the penalties thereof in the case of parents and employers acting in contravention of this Bill.

Section 12 makes the agents and workmen of employers equally liable with the employer himself, when the boy has been employed in contravention of this Regulation by an agent or workman of the employer.

Though the Bill is proposed to be made applicable in the first instance to boys only, provision is made in Section 13 to extend it to girls also, if the Government are so advised. Considering that the education of girls has an important place in the educational systems of all civilised countries, the necessity for this provision will not, I hope, be seriously questioned by any one, and I, for one, am for extending compulsory Elementary Education to the girls of Travancore in the near future, if it could not be had simultaneously with the education of boys.

Section 14 confers upon the Government the power to make the necessary Rules for th general and effective working of the provisions of this Regulation. This, in short, is the whole o the Bill now before us.

The object of this Bill is to ensure a general diffusion of education amongst the masses by resorting to compulsion.

At three of the early Sessions of the Sri Mulam Popular Assembly, it was represented that Elementary Education should be made both free and compulsory.

In 1905, at the Second Sitting of the Assembly, my learned friend Mr. Sesha Aiyar, who, by his learning and close study of the local conditions, is competent to address on this subject, referring to the necessity for making Primary Education free and compulsory, said thus:—"Organisation an "intelligence in every function of national life is necessary for national survival. No n "could contribute its full share to the total progress of human activity, if even the appare "most insignificant worker in the community did not receive special and intelligent training. M "ern conditions demand that for the achievement of national success the plough-boy and craftsn "no less than the statesman, should receive intelligent training. Under a uniform system of "Primary Education, all children should be enabled to transform the usual meaningless "WHY "into reasoned enquiry and to turn their ceaseless natural activity into the co-operative wo "of eye and leg."

"Education is the proper office of Government, a constituent function of the State. Tl "parents are under no legal obligation to educate their children, and hence the necessity "making Primary Education compulsory, and that necessity has been recognised in several countries

Mr. Sesha Aiyar brought up this subject again for representation at the Third Sitting the Assembly, and he was supported by four other representative gentlemen. At the Fourth Session of the Assembly, Mr. C. Krishna Pillai, B. A., a retired Inspector of Schools, who, during l long service in the Education Department of the State, had large opportunities of studying the nee and wishes of the people and, therefore, can speak with authority on the subject, represented that during the past 40 years only 27 per cent of the boys and 14 per cent of the girls of the school-going age were under instruction, and urged very strongly the necessity for free and compulsory education. The Government then replied:—"The desire expressed to make Primary Education free and to "make it compulsory has the complete sympathy of the Government. Unless we are prepared "to make Primary Education free, we cannot make it compulsory. That being the state of "affairs, all that I can tell you is that your suggestions will be borne in mind as ideals to be "achieved in due time." Then again, at the last Session, more than one representative Member strongly advocated the introduction of compulsory Primary Education in the State. While so persistent and emphatic was the demand for compulsory education, can the objection urged against this Bill, that a law of the kind is hardly necessary, have any force or substance in it? It is, Sir, to meet a genuine public demand that I sought permission to introduce this Bill.

The history of Elementary Education throughout the world clearly establishes that without resort to compulsion no country can ensure a general diffusion of education among its people. As Sir William Wedderburn aptly observes :— "All civilised countries have begun with the volun- "tary system and abandoned it." I cannot conceive of an exception to this proposition. However civilised a nation may be, mass education can be reached only if education is made compulsory. The late Mr. Gladstone, at the time of the discussion of the English Education Act of 1870, made

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frank admission:— "Well, Sir, there is another principle and undoubtedly of the gravest character which I can even now hardly hope—though I do hope after all that we had seen is accepted on the other side of the House—I mean the principle that compulsion must be applied in some effective manner to the promotion of education. I freely and frankly own that it was not without an effort that I myself accepted it. I deeply regret the necessity. I think that it is a scandal and shame to the country that in the midst of our, as we think, advanced civilisation and undoubtedly of our enormous wealth, we should at this time of day be obliged to entertain this principle of compulsion. Nevertheless, we have arrived deliberately at the conclusion that it must be enteretained." Who can say that, when England in spite of all her civilisation had to resort to compulsion to promote mass education, Travancore is above this necessity and that people in Travancore are so good, excellent and civilised, that mass education can be achieved in Travancore without a legislation of this kind? Proud as I feel to be a Travancorean, prouder shall I feel if Travancore can effect the promotion of mass education without the application of the principle of compulsion. However enchanting it might be to live in the land of dreams, we cannot escape the stern actualities which stare us in the face. To me it appears it is a delusion to think that Travancore can ever hope to have mass education without introducing the principle of compulsion. We can rest assured that little good will be done by any system of education in the matter of educating the masses, if it does not enforce compulsory attendance. This has been the fate of all civilised States both in and out of India. Elementary Education is both compulsory and free in Great Britain and Ireland, France, Germany, Switzerland, Austria-Hungary, Italy, Belgium, Denmark, Norway, Sweden, The United States of America, Canada, Australia, Japan, the Phillippines and Ceylon. It is also compulsory and free in Baroda, and Mysore has recently followed in the wake of Baroda. The results achieved in these places are highly encouraging. England, where about 43 per cent of children of school-going age were at school at the passing of the English Education Act, took only 10 years from the date of the Act to bring all her children to school; and Japan, whose school-going population was about 28 per cent when she introduced the compulsory system had not to wait more than 20 years to produce the necessary result.

Elementary Education in Travancore has been carried on on a voluntary basis till this, and I ask my friends, who think that a law of this kind is hardly necessary, what progress has Elementary Education made in Travancore? The percentage of literacy, as per the Census of 1911, is 15. The Census Commissioner gives us the following statistics and facts at page 158 of his Report:—"Of the total number of literate males, 77 per cent are of the ages of 20 and over. The remaining 23 per cent fall under 20 years and are distributed in the proportions of 2, 9 and 12 between the age periods of 0-10, 10-15 and 15-20 respectively." At page 159, the Commissioner says:— "It may be surprising that the Head-quarter Division which contains the seat of Higher Education in the State occupies a low place, especially in regard to female literacy. But facilities for imparting Elementary Education more or less exist throughout the State, and that is all the Census is concerned with." At page 164, the Report makes the statement:— "Calculated on the total population of 1911, the number under instruction in all the recognised institutions taken together is 5 per cent, and does not seem to indicate any perceptible advance over the proportions at the two previous Censuses. But it has to be observed that such a broad comparison is misleading. The total on which the ratio is calculated includes persons who can never be at school nor will ever return to it. Children under 5 years may, therefore, be left out of reckoning. In regard to persons at the higher ages, it may be said, pitching the estimate a little high, that persons above the age of 30 are not likely candidates for schooling. Taking therefore the population living in the ages of 5 to 30, the proportion comes and 9 per cent. This when compared with the 6 per cent 20 years ago is a satisfactory record." Is This record, I ask, after all, satisfactory? How the 6 per cent has been arrived at, the Report does not tell us, and, reading the Census Reports of the previous years, it seems to me that that percentage has also been calculated in the same manner as the 5 per cent referred to above by the Commissioner. Calculating the proportion in the way the 9 per cent has been reached, what would have been the corresponding percentage it is not easy for us to say, though there can be no doubt that it must be higher than 6 per cent. The comparison has to be effected between the latter percentage and the 9 per cent relied on by the Commissioner and the progress of education has to be gauged by the result of that comparison. If during 40 years, only 27 per cent of boys and 14 per cent of girls of the school-going age were brought under instruction, fancy the low progress Elementary Education has made and the long period required to put every boy and girl of the school-going age under instruction.

According to the latest Census, only 4·6 per cent of the whole population are receving education and only 15 per cent are literates. It might be asked, do not these figures show that Travancore at any rate does not require compulsory education? In many European countries, as also The United States of America, Canada, and Australia, even according to the Census of 1901, almost the entire population is able to read and write. Then again, in The United States of America, 21 per cent of the whole population is receiving Elementary Education: in Canada, in Australia, in Switzerland, in Great Britain and Ireland, the proportion ranges from 20 to 17, and in Germany, in Austria-Hungary, in Norway and in the Netherlands, the proportion is from 17 to 15. In most

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of these countries, education is both free and compulsory. Even according to the Administration Report for 1088, only 39.8 per cent of the school-going population are receiving instruction in Travancore. More than three-fifths of the population of the school-going age are left uneducated. Judged from what has been stated above, how could we say the progress of Elementary Education has been satisfactory in Travancore?

. The argument of my learned friend Mr. Subba Aiyar that Elementary Education has been largely availed of by the public only shows, even if it be a fact, the preparedness of the people—indeed a healthy sign—to welcome a legislation of this sort and is an argument I must say in favor of the Bill. I think it my duty in this connection to point out that the aim of the Bill is only to see that Elementary Education is more largely availed of by the public.

Times are fast changing. People's share in the administration of the country is being recognised slowly but steadily. The number of T. I. Cs has become increased. The Co-operative Credit Societies' Bill and the Village Panchayat Courts Bill have become the laws of the country. The Agricultural Department is extending its usefulness by publishing leaflets, pamphlets and an agricultural journal has been started educating the ryots.

How are these measures to prove a blessing to the people if they are to be kept ignorant of the 3 R's? I am sure you will agree with me when I say that without at least giving the people that little knowledge of the letters which will enable them to read and understand them, the purpose of the Government is sure to be defeated. There is practically no field of national activity where our ambitions and aspirations are not weighted down by the illiteracy of the people. In a recent number of the Commonweal, the Hon'ble Mr. V. S. Srinivasa Sastri says :—"Every person engaged in the work of ameliorating the condition of the people is brought up almost at the beginning of his labours against the dead wall of ignorance. Ask the man charged with spreading co-operative credit in rural areas, he says : "Educate the people." Ask the agricultural expert whose business is to teach new methods, he says : "Educate the people." Ask the enthusiastic sanitarian who, after all, is abroad, he says : "Educate the people." Ask the intelligent employer who anxious to improve the efficiency of the labourer, he says : "Educate the people." Ask the temperance reformer, he says : "Educate the people." Ask the social worker who would free the rustic from fear of the policeman, the forest guard, the sowcar and the curnam, he says : "Educate the people." Blest indeed is this movement for universal popular education which is the indispensable condition of all progress." In the same issue of the Commonweal, another writer with equal force says thus :—"This analysis must bring out how sadly the progress of India is handicapped by the absence of universal Elementary Education. The loss is far greater than it is generally believed to be ; nor is it confined to our activities only in the abovementioned direction. The illiteracy of the ryot is a powerful obstacle to our political or social progress. Owing to it, he is untouched by the several currents of thought which are educating the literate section of the Indians. If our progress is to be uniform, if we are to carry the masses along with us either in political or social reform, or, in other words, if we are to avoid the stock criticism of those who point out, in season and out of season, that all our grievances are those of only the upper ten, Primary Education should become universal, and if we correctly estimate the mischief of this criticism—of course unjust in most instances—we can well understand why our leaders have placed the demand for compulsory education in the forefront of our national programme." In Travancore, look at the condition of the Malayalee Brahmins, the Mahommedans, the Pulayas and other communities, who are educationally backward, and are still indifferent to the necessity of education. How can national efficiency be attained when these are steeped in ignorance? I need hardly say that it is the supreme and sacred function of the State to promote and encourage education amongst its masses irrespective of caste, color and creed, and that the State can effect this only by the introduction of compulsion in some form or other. The only effective way then of combating this colossal popular ignorance is by introducing the system of free and compulsory education. The parents ought to be told that the law casts on them an obligation to educate all their children. Referring to the importance of this subject, the Hon'ble Mr. Gokhale said at the inaugural meeting of the Madras Elementary Education League :—"The question of universal education is really at the root of the question of the moral and material condition of the masses of our people. Whether it is destitution, whether it is misery, whether it is squalor or whether it is disease that you want to fight, you are forced to this conclusion that the first remedy of all remedies is to be able to remove the ignorance of the mass of the people and to give to people the benefit of education. If you want to improve the wage-earning capacity of the worker, if you want the peasant to grow stronger and take better care of himself in his dealing with the money-lender, if you want him better to understand the benefits of sanitation, if you want him to go out of superstitious beliefs—if you want to do any of these things—you will find that the first and foremost thing to do is to give him the rudiments of knowledge. Without that you could do nothing with him. With that you can do everything. Therefore, the question lies at the root of the moral and material advancement of our people. You will remember that this is recognised everywhere else in the world both by the Government and the people. In this country if you are zealous of our good name, if you do not want to be reckoned with uncivilised nations, we ought to realise towards our poor brethren the same responsibility which the State and people are realising in other countries. This is

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matter of absolute justice to the poorer people of our land. They have got the faculty of receiving the rudiments of knowledge, the same as other people. It is a monstrous and cruel wrong that millions and millions should be left without that knowledge, that the joy of that knowledge should be absolutely unexperienced by them. I think the consciousness of our people has been sleeping much too long, and it is time some of us roused that conscience as vigorously as we can. It is not only the consciousness of the people that has been sleeping, the consciousness of the Government has also been sleeping in this matter." Even Sir Harcourt Butler, who led the opposition to the Hon'ble Mr. Gokhale's Elementary Education Bill, admitted the importance and necessity of the general diffusion of Primary Education amongst the people and of the responsibility of the Government to make it free and compulsory. He said :—"We are all of us working for the same object. I should rejoice as much as they to see a condition of things in which Elementary Vernacular Education could be compulsory and free in India. The Government of India are deeply concerned to bring about such a condition of things. We are convinced of the necessity of breaking down illiteracy in India, and the interest of the Government of India has not been confined to words." Later on, the Hon'ble Member says thus :—"It can do much. It can fit the masses in this country to cope on more equal terms with the forces, the pressing forces of material progress. It can create a greater adaptability to agricultural and industrial advancement. It can enlarge the minds and brighten the outlook of the people and foster the progressive outlook of the people and foster progressive desire which is the root of the economic growth of a community." In speaking of the attitude of the Government towards this subject the Hon'ble Member says :—"Our mind is fixed to spread uniform Elementary Education. There are many difficulties ahead, but we shall not flinch, we shall not falter in the way. We are determined, resolutely determined, to combat ignorance throughout the length and breadth of this ancient land up and down, to and fro, though the struggle may be long and arduous, I do believe with all my heart, I do believe, we shall prevail." The Census Commissioner in Travancore says in his last Report at page 163 that the Government have accepted the full responsibility for the imparting of free Primary Education to all children; and, if so, how can the Government oppose this Bill ? I am glad to see from the Administration Report of the year 1088 that a scheme is under the consideration of the Darbar to make Elementary Education compulsory. I know a special Committee has been appointed to draw up the scheme and the Government have also spent some money on it. Can it be said under these circumstances that a legislation to make Elementary Education compulsory is unnecessary? One who cares to ascertain the public opinion on this Bill cannot but be struck with the large volume of opinion expressed in favor of the Bill both from the public platform and by the Press and by all sections of His Highness' subjects. No Bill in the Legislative Council has yet attracted so effectively and so largely the support of the people. The Bill is enthusiastically welcomed by all classes of His Highness' subjects. I would not be justified in taking up the time of this Council by quoting all these opinions, and I shall, therefore, be content with refering to a few of them.

The *Uttara Tharaka* (edited by R. Easwara Pillai, Esq., B. A., a retired Inspector of Schools and a late Member of this Council) says in its editorial of 17-7-1089 :—"To Mr. Kesava Pillai is due the credit of making the first move in this direction in Travancore, and we have no doubt that he will receive the active and warm sympathy and support of the whole Council. The Bill itself is very simple in its scope and unpretentious in its aims. It seems to have been drafted on the lines of the Mysore Elementary Education Bill, which has already become law. To our mind, there do not seem to be insuperable difficulties in the working of its provisions. Of course a measure of this kind is likely to evoke opposition in some quarters, but it is bound to subside with a clearer perception of its object and a fuller appreciation of its results. In view to the lasting good that is sure to accrue from the measure, temporary inconveniences and difficulties will have to be put up with and self-sacrifices made. But we shall be amply rewarded for these in the fulness of time by increased prosperity, comfort and happiness.

"The present Bill aims at a very high Educational ideal *viz.*, that every child of school-going age in the State should receive some sort of elementary instruction or other. This, every one will admit, is an ideal which none of us can reasonably and consistently take exception to. There are, however, one or two objections advanced against the measure that deserve consideration. One of the objections is that the introduction of the measure will necessitate a very large outlay on the part of Government. Perhaps it will. But whether the measure be accepted or not, Government will, sooner or later, have to face the problem, and the sooner it is done, the better. For some years to come, they will have to incur increasing expenditure on account of Elementary Education, which it is their avowed object and policy to promote. The only difference is that, as matters now stand, the expenditure may be spread over a large number of years. The present measure also demands nothing more than this.

The Bill gives ample power to Government to restrict its operations to specified areas, so that the necessity for a large initial outlay need not occur at all. They can so regulate the operation of the measure as not to involve them in financial embarrassments. It may be introduced *tentatively* in select areas and extended as experience dictates or finances allow.

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"The next question to be considered is whether the measure will not act as a hardship to certain sections of the population. The low economic condition of certain classes would not allow of their children being weaned from their ancestral occupations. But the power of exemption vested in the Government sufficiently covers all cases in which any hardship is likely to be felt. Then, it may be asked, what is the necessity for a measure like this? May not things be allowed to continue as now? We are inclined to think that the measure serves a very important purpose. In the first place, it clearly defines the policy that ought to be pursued by Government in regard to Elementary Education and gives that policy legislative sanction. It also exercises a very wholesome effect upon the people. It makes the masses understand that it is their duty to educate their children and that indifference to or violation of it will be taken serious notice of. It is calculated to draw public attention to the subject and to create a public opinion in favour of it. And these circumstances are certainly essential and conducive to the growth and spread of Elementary Education among the masses. The expression "Compulsory Education" may sound harsh or offensive to the ear; but properly speaking we have very little of it here. There is in fact only a mild sort of coercion half-way between free-will and compulsion. In short, we have here but the thin end of the wedge. We hope that the measure will ere long become law."

The "*Adhyapakan,*" an educational monthly magazine edited by G. Raman Menon, Esq. M. A., an Assistant Inspector of Schools, in the recent issue of it, says thus in supporting this Bill:—"The principle of compulsory education is to come into operation only in such areas and from such dates as may be notified by Government from time to time. Again, the Bill makes provision for exempting boys from attendance where there is reasonable excuse for non-attendance. These provisions show that the mover of the Bill has carefully considered the practical working of the measure.

"In spite of the practical and moderate tone of the Bill, some gentlemen appear to look askance at it. The Government, they say, are unable to provide accommodation and teaching staff even for the boys who are voluntarily sent to school. What then is the use of introducing compulsory education? The answer is that it is required as an ideal to be adopted and steadily followed by Government and the people alike. The principle, if adopted, will serve as a force to divert public funds from useless or pernicious channels to useful ones. It cannot be denied that a considerable portion of the wealth of the community is now spent in ways which undermine the strength and self-reliance of the community. The expenditure incurred in carrying out some obsolete religious forms and ceremonies and in supporting institutions, which are luxuries, both by the Government and the people at large, has to be diverted into useful channels, useful in the stage of evolution which the community has now reached. This can be effected only by keeping up to date and well approved ideals prominently in view. Moreover, all persons who are acquainted with the life of the masses in our country know very well that sufficient attention is not being paid by the ordinary man to the proper education (even of an elementary kind) of the children under his care. Hence it is necessary for the Government to do everything in their power to rouse the people to their responsibilities. This is all that is aimed at by the Bill in question, and hence it ought to receive the strong and unqualified support of all well-wishers of the country.

"Another aspect of the objection brought forward against the Bill is that, under the present financial position of the country, the Bill even if it is passed will necessarily be a dead letter for a long time to come. This objection is due to failure on the part of the objectors to understand the fact that the Bill contemplates only a gradual introduction of compulsion.

The "*People's Weekly,*" edited at the capital by an experienced graduate, says in its editorial column of the issue dated 8-11-1913: "That the necessity of placing parents under a legal obligation to educate their children has long been felt in Travancore will be evidenced by the representations made on the subject from time to time at the successive Sessions of the Sri Mulam Popular Assembly. We have every reason to believe that the proposed Bill will become law in Travancore in the near future.

The "*Malayalee*" in its editorial of 1-11-1913 examines the provisions of the Bill and says that it is a very important and useful piece of legislation and that the objections urged against the Bill at the time permission to introduce it was sought for, are untenable in the nature of the provisions of the Bill.

The "*West-coast Spectator*" in its editorial columns of its issue dated 8-11-1913 writes:—"We are glad that the author of the Bill has promptly come at this stage of his country's evolution to forge the only lever that will raise any nation up. We do not know the sort of reception the Darbar will give to the Bill. It is, however, earnestly to be hoped that they will not follow the example of the Government of India in their treatment of Mr. Gokhale's Bill. They will not, we hope, reject the Bill after an expression of pious, though sincere, sympathy with the aspirations which have found expression before them. We expect the Non-official Members to give the Bill their united and whole-hearted support. The progress of the Bill through the Council will certainly be watched in this country with the keenest interest.

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The "*Malayala Manorama*" of Kottayam in its editorial of 15-11-1913 says, after discussing the provisions of the Bill at length, that it is the unanimous prayer of all the loyal subjects of His Most Gracious Highness the Maha Raja that this long cherished Bill will be passed into law by the Legislative Council and that the Government will be prepared to duly put it into practice.

The "*Bhagyodayam*," a Malayalee Brahmin organ in its editorial of 28-11-1913, says:—"We are glad that Travancore is trying to follow the examples of Mysore and Baroda in recognising the necessity to place the parents under a legal obligation to educate their children. The present Bill may be a small beginning, but it is in a grand direction and with a grander aim, which when attained, shall raise this land to a much higher intellectual level. With proper discretion in the matter of selection of areas to introduce the proposed law and great sagacity shown in the exercise of the prerogative vested in the School Attendance Committee, we have no doubt of even the immediate success of the Bill. We congratulate Mr. P. K. Kesava Pillai on his proposed Bill and hope to see it passed into law."

The "*Lokaprakasam*" from Trichur says in its editorial dated 8-12-'13:—"Viewed from any point whatever Mr. Pillai's Bill, which is calculated to confer immense good on the future subjects of the Maha Raja, is one of considerable and far-reaching importance, and by giving their assent to the passing of it, the Government of Travancore will only be taking another step in the right direction like the Sister States of Baroda and Mysore who have already taken the lead in this direction."

The "*Vignanaratnakaram*," a monthly in its October issue of 1913, while supporting the Bill, says that it is highly necessary that the Bill should be passed into law as desired by the people and the Members of the Council and His Gracious Highness the Maha Raja would be pleased to pass it as the first Regulation in 1090.

The "*Madras Times*," the "*Madras Standard*," the "*Hindu*," the "*Indian Patriot*," the "*Weekly Chronicle*," the "*United India and Native States*," the "*Malabar Herald*," the "*Subashani*," the *Sujanamitram*," the "*Nasrani Deepika*" have all, amongst several others, accorded their hearty support to this Bill.

The "*Keraleeya Nayar Samajam*, at the last Session held at Kottayam has passed a resolution in support of the Bill and the learned mover Mr. R. Easwara Pillai has advanced cogent and convincing reasons to support the Bill.

The "*Keraleeya Brahmma Samajam*," the public of Neyyattinkaray, an important and influential Taluq and the "*Sadu Jana Paripalana Sangam*" have also passed resolutions supporting the Bill. Distinguished men like the Honorable Dr. T. M. Nair and others have also written to me supporting the measure. This is what the President of the last Session of the Indian National Congress said:—"We in this Congress have noticed with pride and satisfaction the steps that have been taken by the progressive Governments of Baroda and Mysore to push on compulsory Primary Education in their territories. The latest to fall into line with these States in this regard is Travancore. May we not expect the action which has been taken by the enlightened Rulers of these States will be followed by the Paramount Power?"

Happily for Travancore, education has been now made free. The Settlement operations have now come to a close and all the obstacles which, according to the Government, stood in their way to make Elementary Education compulsory stand now removed. More than all, the finances are also in a prosperous condition. Travancore could no longer afford, therefore, to lag behind Baroda and Mysore; and a beginning, however small, has to be made in making Elementary Education compulsory, and the Government, I am glad to note, are also prepared to do so.

I have been tempted to dwell at this length—I fear it has been tedious—on the necessity for this Bill by the argument advanced the other day by my learned friend Mr. Subba Aiyar when I sought for permission to introduce the Bill "that a Bill of this kind was hardly necessary.' The argument, as it did come from a responsible Official Member of the Council, I thought it my duty to meet by pointing out to this House that it is not supported by facts, and, therefore, not acceptable.

Coming to the practical working of the Bill, it is argued that without casting a legal obligation on the Government, the Bill, even if passed, would be only a dead letter. I have only to appeal to the good sense of those who advance this argument that they are attributing bad motives to a generous, enlightened and charitable Government and to request them to remember that the Government are also at one with us now in realising the necessity and importance of a compulsory system of education.

All manner of difficulties are suggested, but they are more imaginary than real. I have heard a few gentlemen putting the question to themselves and whispering it to those who are in their confidence, what does Mr. Kesava Pillai mean by asking for permission to introduce the Travancore Elementary Education Bill, and how could it be worked? They seem to know not what is

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taking place elsewhere. I must confess, Sir, I have not been able to understand the signficance of these anxious and learned queries. May I be permitted to put one or two questions in return to them? How is it worked in those places where education is made compulsory? If three Indian Native States like Baroda, Sangli and Mysore could enforce it, what difficulty can progressive Travancore find against enforcing the same here? I do not for a moment propose that the Travancore Darbar should make Elementary Education compulsory at one stroke all through the State. I am not in this Bill making any such startling and embarassing proposals. All that I do is to request the Government to recognise the principle of compulsion in educating the children of the State and to confer slowly, but steadily, upon the people the vast blessings, both moral and material, which flow from a general diffusion of education. The Government have now accepted this principle and the onward march is easy.

A good friend of mine in all seriousness suggested to me that the Bill could not be of any practical use unless Elementary Education is made compulsory all throughout the State in one jump and, if it could not be had, it would be better for me to drop the Bill. The proposal speaks for itself. The suggestion is, to say the least, beyond the range of practical politics. I have only to tell my friend that Rome was not built in a day. The history of Elementary Education all throughout the world does not give us one instance where it has been so done. The suggestion is so patently impracticable that it is better to drop it here.

It is next asked where the money is to come from and why a cess be not imposed for the purpose. If at all it is here that the Government might differ from this Bill. I have given the subject my best and anxious consideration, and I am against the imposition of any special cess for reasons more than one. Public opinion expressed by the Press and on the platform is against the imposition of a cess. The announcement by the Government at the last Session of the Sri Mulam Popular Assembly that a special cess is contemplated has been received with great discontent by he people. The Keralecya Nayar Samajam and the public of Neyyattinkarai have passed resolutions protesting against the cess. Mr. R. Easwara Pillai, in moving the resolution at the last Session of the Keralceya Nayar Samajam, said that the imposition of a cess meant the abolition of free Primary Education, a boon which the people now enjoy, as the Government are substituting a cess in place of fees. People have only begun to taste the sweetness of free education and before they are allowed to do so, it is cruel on the Government to deprive them of it and ask them to pay a cess. The *Malayali*, the *Manorama*, the *Bhagyodayam*, the *West-coast Spectator*, the *Adhyapakan*, the *People's Weekly*—amongst others—have also expressed against the imposition of any cess. Who can deny, Sir, that there has been, of late, a steady rapid increase in the burdens of the people for which there has been no necessity? In all great countries including India, enhanced taxation has been the result of military and naval expenditure. In Travancore, there is no such expenditure and therefore the expenditure must be for productive and useful purposes. Without an additional cess, Elementary Education has been made free and compulsory in several civilized countries and Travancore would do well to follow their example. Permit me, Sir, in this connection to say that if a little relaxation is made in the Rules of the Education Code regulating school buildings and accommodation and qualifications of teachers so far as Lower Grade Elementary Schools are concerned and a little more tenderness and respect shown to private agencies in the field, the way to make Elementary Education compulsory will be easier. Let our ambition be, as the Emperor of Japan said in the famous Declaration of 1872 on the subject of compulsory education, that "there shall not be an ignorant family in a village and an ignorant member in a family." The people of Japan seem to have held classes in verandahs and I do not find anything discreditable or objectionable in holding Elementary Schools in ordinary and modest buildings instead of the regulation buildings which the State would do well to keep as an ideal to be achieved in due time. All that I advocate is the diffusion of mass education, and the shortest and the surest means of attaining it should be resorted to. I do not for a moment deprecate the excellence of an educational system which insists on decent and substantial school buildings, up-to-date furniture and apparatus, model teachers and a first class inspecting staff. All that I say is let not the want of these stand in the way of the progress of Elementary Education, and let not these be considered indispensable for the promotion of Elementary Education. The only question is, should the generations wait till this ideal of perfection is realised? I think it is folly to do so. Delay is dangerous. Allow me to say in the words of the Hon'ble Mr. V. S. Srinivasa Sastry:—"A long time must pass after its introduction for any good result to be perceptible. One entire generation must have been under its influence before the figure for literacy shows a material advance. The school habit takes several generations to take root. It will be long, long indeed, before the character, the self-reliance or the economic efficiency of the people show any marked improvement. Not a day, therefore, should be lost which could by any possibility be saved in securing this great blessing for the poor dumb millions of India."

I am suggesting these means so as to reduce the additional expenditure the Government would have necessarily to incur in making Elementary Education compulsory. As for the additional expenditure there can be no helping it. All civilized countries where Elementary Education is free and compulsory are finding adequate funds for carrying out effectively this educational policy.

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The finances of our country are happily in a flourishing condition and promise also to be more flourishing, and the enlightened Government of His Highness the Maha Raja whose zeal to promote the cause of education is unbounded, would be only earning the everlasting gratitude of the people if more funds are devoted every year for the extension of Elementary Education. All that is wanted is a more liberal budget allotment for Elementary Education from year to year as circumstances would permit, remembering that in the words of Lord Curzon the first claims upon its bounty "that Government would do well to acknowledge, will be the education of its masses." Where there is a will there is a way; and I do not wish, therefore, to suggest further details regarding the practical working of the Bill.

Permit me to say in this connection that the expenditure on Elementary Education for the years 1087 and 1088 was Rs. 1,69,845 and Rs. 2,98,279 respectively, while Baroda whose population is only a little less than two-thirds of the population in Travancore, spent during the same years Rs. 8,84,257 and Rs. 9,54,166. According to these figures, while Baroda was spending on Elementary Education more than half the allotment for Education, Travancore had spent only one-ninth in 1087 and one-sixth in 1088. These figures would show that Elementary Education in Travancore receives neither adequate nor proportionate consideration.

In Baroda, Primary Schools are opened wherever it is possible to gather together 15 children. On this basis, no village in Baroda with a population of 100 souls will be without a school. How vastly different is the condition in Travancore !

Any Amount spent on Elementary Education is money well spent. As the Editor of the People's Weekly has been pointing out recently in a series of articles, the finances of the country are not properly spent for the benefit of the people. By a careful handling of the finances, enough funds, I am sure, would be forthcoming to carry out the objects of the Bill. Every pie of the revenue of the State should be spent for the benefit of the people. Several ways suggest themselves to me whereby the present expenditure on other Departments could be curtailed without paralysing the work of these Departments and the moneys so saved could be with advantage utilised for Elementary Education. As matters stand at present, the Government are not spending any considerable amount on Elementary Education.

Large sums of money are being spent on higher education the benefit of which after all goes only to a few. The Government are acquiring sites at enormous cost for Higher Grade Secondary Schools and Colleges and are putting up costly and palatial buildings for them and sometimes to accommodate even their Principals. While the Higher Education stands on this basis, it is indeed regrettable that buildings for Elementary Schools are required to be put up by the people at their cost and only a very small sum is devoted by the State for Elementary Education. The Government should be more concerned with the spread of Elementary Education and with the introduction of a system of such education whereby all are enabled to receive the benefit thereof. That is a consummation to be more devoutly wished for than giving Higher Education at enormous cost to a few. Let the necessaries of life be provided for first and let them have precedence over luxuries.

Travancore is fortunate in having as its Ruler a highly enlightened Sovereign whose only care is to promote the material prosperity of His Highness' country. The manifold blessings which have been conferred on the people and in particular, the great progress education has made during His Highness' beneficent Reign, have emboldened us to hope fervently that His Highness' Government would do everything to bring into practical reality the consummation of a Compulsory Primary Education in the country, the acme of the present day educational reforms that we so earnestly wish for. I propose, therefore, that the principle of the Bill be affirmed and the Bill be referred to a Select Committee.

Mr. K. G. Sesha Iyer, in seconding Mr. Kesava Pillai, said :—

I regard this as an important day in the history of this Council. For the first time in its history, an elected representative of the people has brought before the Council a Bill of far-reaching importance and consequence to the State, on his own initiative. Unlike certain pieces of social legislation already incorporated in the Statute Book or now pending before this Council, which came before us as Government measures, the Primary Education Bill has come into this Council as a private measure, introduced by a private Member ; and for that very reason, as also on account of its supreme importance, I would crave for it the most sympathetic and the most earnest consideration of Honourable Members. On 24th October 1905, at the Second Session of the Sri Mulam Popular Assembly, I had the honour of presenting for the serious consideration of Government the desirability of making Primary Education free and compulsory. At the two succeeding Sessions of the Assembly also, I pressed this most momentous subject upon Government ; and soon afterwards, we acknowledge with sincere gratitude that Government were pleased to make Primary Education free throughout the State. The question of compulsory Primary Education has since then been kept well to the fore at the subsequent Sessions of the Assembly, and the Bill before us is a direct result of the people's demand. The Bill aims at the gradual introduction of the principle of compulsion into the system of Elementary Education, so that mass education may become universal in the

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State. I am sure no-body will under-estimate the value of such achievement. The children of the State are its most valuable assets, and it is the bounden duty of every State to so train its children that they may, with the fullest advantage to the State, easily take their place in civic society as members of the nation. The theory of national life that is associated with the present day is that organisation and intelligence in every function of national life is indispensable for national existence. Trained intelligence forms the basis of national efficiency. No State can, under modern conditions, contribute its full share to the progress of human activity, if even the most insignificant worker among its people does not receive special and intelligent training. It is specially so, as the economic ramifications today are so widespread and all-embracing that a touch anywhere makes itself felt at the most distant places. Those who have studied the conditions of modern national life will readily concede that the plodding plough-boy in the field, the humble artisan in the shop and the poor factory hand at the mill, no less than the statesman that sits directing the State at the helm, should possess intellectual efficiency, if national success should be achieved. Indeed the outstanding feature of life in the present century is the dominance of intelligence. If the intelligence of a nation, in all its grades, be not trained, it should be content to lie at anchor in the stream of time; and if it did so, it would automatically drop out of existence, for, progress is the law of life. There is but one force that can take a people up the stream, and that is education. That a State or a people may, in view of the present day aggressive civilisation, be efficient to fight the battle of life, the whole body of national intelligence should receive training that it may effectively serve national ends. If this central truth be realized, we can easily understand how education should be regarded as one of the most important functions of the State. Indeed, it is one of the veriest platitudes of present day political philosophy that education is, to use an expression made familiar by Dr. Woodrow Wilson, now President of The United States of America, 'a constituent function' of the modern State. All over the civilized world, in eastern as well as in western countries, education, especially of children, has been accepted as a primary duty resting upon Government. Elementary Education for the masses has been made free and universal in almost all the European countries. The only country in Europe in which, so far as I can gather, Elementary Education is not compulsory is Russia; but as even in Russia Elementary Education is free, I am not sure that the newly awakened Russian national consciousness will not in the near future seek to secure the rudiments of education to every Russian child, or in other words, compel the parent or guardian of each child in Russia to send it to a recognized school for a certain specified period. In The United States of America, in Canada, in Australia, in Japan and in Ceylon, Elementary Education has been made both free and compulsory. With your permission, I shall refer to the terms of the Imperial Edict by which Japan ordained universal popular education, in that progressive country. The Edict declares that "Education was essential to all persons, and that whereas in the past, learning had often been looked upon as a means of securing official position, henceforward the whole population of the country, regardless of the classes, must be educated, so that *no village should contain a house devoid of learning nor any house contain an illiterate inmate.*" Noble words of high import which, in the Land of the Rising Sun, have already attained due fulfilment and full fruition. In India, Baroda, Sangli and Mysore among the Native States have made Primary Education compulsory as well as free; and as regards British India, though the Hon'ble Mr. Gokhale's Bill was thrown out by the Imperial Legislative Council in 1912, it is well known that the whole of India, speaking through not only the Indian National Congress and the Moslem League but through other recognized channels as well, most emphatically approved of compulsory Elementary Education, and that at the Council, while at least one Provincial Government had instructed its representative not to oppose the Bill, Sir Harcourt Butler, representing the Government of India, gave expression to the following pregnant words. He said:— "*I should rejoice no less than they* (Mr. Gokhale and his supporters) *to see a condition of things in India in which Elementary Vernacular Education could be free and compulsory. The Government of India are deeply concerned to bring about such a condition of things. We are convinced of the necessity of breaking down illiteracy in the country.*" The Government of His Gracious Highness the Maha Raja have already bestowed upon his loyal and loving subjects the blessing of free Primary Education. There can be no doubt that, as a progressive Government, they are deeply concerned about the existence of illiteracy in the State, and convinced of the supreme necessity of breaking it down. Is there any field of our national activity in which our endeavours and aspirations are not effectively blocked by the illiteracy of the people? The illiterate mass of society will always act as dead weight upon us in all our attempts to achieve social or political progress. The living currents of thought which are educating the literate portion of society and filling them with high ambitions and noble discontents, leave the illiterate section untouched; and how is healthy national life possible if the constituent organisms do not realize their specific ends through the general life and advancement of the whole? It should be the concern of Government that every unit that forms a member of the State is so trained as to be thoroughly efficient from his sphere in life, however humble it may be, to help on the harmonious progress of society. If our progress is to be uniform, Primary Education should become universal; and to secure that highly desirable end, the civilized countries of the world teach us only one means, and that is the introduction of the principle of compulsion into the system of Primary Education in the State. I hope the sentimental objection to compulsion as such will not be pressed against the measure. Compulsion is no doubt

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an evil, as being an infringement of the liberty of the people; and if compulsion of every form should be denounced as indefensible, there could be no law at all. It will do us good to remember in this connection that in liberty-loving England, compulsion in Elementary Education was introduced by the greatest of liberal ministers, Mr. Gladstone. We may also remember that there is no legal obligation on the parent to educate his child, and that the State stands in a peculiar relation of obligation to its children, who are its wards. To express it in other words, the Crown has the right as *pater patrias* to interfere for the benefit of children, who are incapable of protecting themselves. It is significant that in the legislation of all civilized nations today, nothing is more striking than the concentration on the child. The legislature has elsewhere enacted several statutes for the benefit and welfare of the child in derogation of the *potestas* of the parent. The recent Children Act of The United Kingdom, known as the Children's Charter, is an instance in point. Confining our attention to legislative work as regards children's education, we find that in England, besides the Education Act of 1870, which made Elementary Education compulsory, there are in the Statute Book the Education Act of 1906, which enabled local educational authorities to provide for meals for children attending public Elementary Schools, and the Education Act of 1907 which laid upon local educational authorities the duty of providing for the medical inspection of all children attending such schools. In connection with the later Act, it may be stated that the Board of Education has established a Medical Department to advise and assist them in supervising local educational authorities in carrying out their statutory duties under the Act. These Acts are significant of the extent of the claim that children have against Government for their betterment, and they illustrate a remarkable feature in recent educational development. In Travancore too, the new sense of the importance of physical culture and hygiene in education is manifest in several provisions of the Education Code. I may particularly refer to the provisions for drill and exercise and school games, for the obligatory ceiling of tiled school buildings, and for the compulsory vaccination and medical examination of school children. The Education Code does not respect even conscientious scruples entertained by parents of school children, based on competent medical advice or authority against vaccination, and the penalty under the Code for refusal to get vaccinated is expulsion from school. All this is compulsion recognised and followed in regard to the education of children, that their physical welfare may not be at stake. Is their intellectual and moral welfare of less consequence that the only means of attaining it should not be compulsorily secured for them? It cannot for a moment be denied that children who are trained for some years in a recognized school will be much better conducted than their brethren of the streets; and who would say that the gain to society by the former being removed from the morally baneful environments in which they would otherwise have been, is negligible? Besides the capacity to read and write which Elementary Education would give to the masses, it would also mean to them, in the inimitable words of the Hon'ble Mr. Gokhale, 'a keener enjoyment of life and a more refined standard of living. It means the greater moral and economic efficiency of the individual. It means a higher level of intelligence for the whole community generally.' Will Government deny to the mass of the people the obvious means of securing this benefit, and to the State the resulting progress towards efficient national life? A weighty responsibility rests on Government in this regard. There has been a strong and steady demand for universal mass education in this State during the last 9 years. Since the Second Session of the Srimulam Popular Assembly, the representation for compulsory Primary Education has been made by the people's representatives almost every year, in the clearest language possible. In the address presented on behalf of the Members of the Ninth Session of the Srimulam Popular Assembly at the conclusion of that Session on 22nd February 1913, the Assembly unanimously pressed upon Government the desirability of making Primary Education compulsory; and at the Tenth Session again, on 26th February last, more than one Member made the representation on behalf of their constituents that the Bill, the principle of which we are now considering, should be passed into law. The articulate voice of the people is that mass education should be made compulsory that it might become universal, and thus conduce to efficient national progress, *And Salus reipublicae suprema lex.*

Even when I first made the representation for free and compulsory Primary Education in 1905, Government did not disapprove of the principle, but thought that the financial burden would be too heavy. Since then, Primary Education has, however, been made free; and hence the objection that one sometimes hears in British India that compulsory education will soon come to mean free education, of which the cost has to be borne by the State, can have no application to the present circumstances in Travancore. Besides, if the education of children is a primary duty of Government, considerations based on consequent financial strain would not justify the rejection of the extremely cautious experiment in compulsory education that the Bill recommends. I have already alluded to the Imperial Edict by which Japan has succeeded in driving out illiteracy from the land. Here is what the *London Times* wrote in its leading columns a few years back. "Our gravest and most continuous mistake", wrote that paper, "is that we have always treated education as one of our subordinate duties in India. We have thought of education as a subsidiary enterprise, a direction in which we might spend money if there was any to spare ..... Education was an end in itself, and is not merely the avenue to so many rupees. The disposition to cut down education grants is still often visible.

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No species of economy is more disastrous." I do not for a moment suggest that the financial aspect should be treated lightly. I only mean to suggest that universal mass education being indispensable for progress, it should be secured to the people by judicious readjustment of the State's expenses. It should not be shelved or sacrificed for other benefits of inferior or questionable importance. If simplicity be accepted as the key-note in the scheme of village education, considerable funds will be available for this necessary purpose.

Sir Frederic Lely, who rose to be Chief Commissioner of the Central Provinces, and sat on the Royal Commission on Indian Decentralization, writes in his '*The Better governing of India*' as follows :— "The great task which lies at the doors of every provincial administration is that of universal education. The Government are committed to it. The only real difficulty is the cost. A step which would at once set free a useful fund for education proper would be to abandon once for all the system under which Government takes upon itself through its Public Works Department to build standard school houses. It will be possible to supply every village with one and a very good thing too, for there is no sound sense in erecting for the children's school a building so much more pretentious than the houses in which the parents live, in which they themselves were borne and marry and live and die.....What ought to happen is that the Department should pay and assign a master and staff to every village where the people undertake to provide a house. If properly handled, the poorest community will only need a grant of timber to help them through... The villagers, if left to themselves, could provide a house at a fraction of what the Government Department has to pay. It also stands to reason that they would under such circumstances be allowed an absolutely free hand to make their own arrangement without fussy interference, the Deputy Inspector having no word in the matter unless only he found the conditions were insanitary. The teaching would be under the control of the Department, the premises under that of the village.....The results would shock an Inspector straight from Europe, just as, if he walked in the fields, he would look with pity on a useful native plough; but to the villagers the school would become a valued possession to be proud of ... Its great merit, besides harmony, is a personal concern of the people themselves, is that it would help the financing of universal instruction. The fundamental reason why this scheme would, with patience and tact, succeed, is that parents are eager to educate their boys." There is a great deal in this valuable suggestion. We appreciate highly fine school houses and valuable school-furniture; but obviously they do not mean better education or education of higher quality. Indeed, I am prepared to go one step further than Sir Frederic-Lely's suggestion would take us, and would suggest that our Primary Schools may, if necessary, meet under a spreading tree for the greater part of the year, and the pupils may squat on a mat spread on the floor, provided that arrangement would secure universal Elementary Education. Even in the cold countries of the West, open air schools are now coming into vogue, and we, with our traditions of the *Asramam* of the Guru where pupils received instruction, can find nothing unnatural or disagreeable in such simple schools. All that we pray is, let not the children of the land be intellectually famished; let all of them be only given plain wholesome food equally, and we do not at all mind if such food be served on the humble but familiar plantain leaf. I may once again refer to the example of Japan. It has no faith in the necessity of costly school-houses and college buildings for efficient education. "If the Japanese," writes Mr. W. H Sharp in his '*Educational System of Japan*' "seem to have plenty of money to spend on education, the explanation lies partly in the economy they practise in the matter of...buildings." May not the same economy be practised here also with advantage? As sage Tiru Valluvar says :—

Those alone have eyes who learning have;
The rest but have two blots upon their face.

I have tried to show how supremely important the measure before the Council is, for securing alike the efficiency of the individual and the progress of the State. I have also tried to show that a bounden duty rests on Government in this regard, and that the question of ways and means, though always an anxious question, cannot be regarded as incapable of solution, and must necessarily be faced and solved. The Bill is neither revolutionary nor impracticable, and the State is ripe for its beneficent operation. For the extension of Elementary Education in the State, it no doubt seeks to introduce the principle of compulsion; but in the beautiful words of Ruskin, "Wise laws and just restraints are to a noble nation not chains but chain-mail."

Mr. A. M. Kumara Pillai supported the motion and said :—

I have great pleasure in supporting the motion now before the Council and in so doing I shall, following my learned friend Mr. K. G. Sesha Aiyar, speak a few words upon the importance and the general character of the Bill under debate. The Bill, as pointed out in the Statement of Objects and Reasons, proposes to provide for the gradual introduction of the principle of compulsion in the system of Elementary Education in the country. Those acquainted with the history of the educational movement in Travancore during the last twenty years would perceive that the stage has been reached when a definite scheme for the diffusion of Elementary Education among the masses by compulsion, has become an imperative necessity. It is a matter for gratification that the Government have expressed themselves in favour of free Elementary Education for the advancement

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of which they have already done something. The object of the present Bill is to extend the principle of free education a step further. It aims at introducing compulsion so as to secure the fullest possible benefit of the policy of the Government in the matter of education. As my friend Mr. Kesava Pillai observed, modern conditions demand that for the attainment of national efficiency, the plough-boy, and craftsman, no less than the statesman should receive intelligent training. All over the civilized world, universal literacy is now recognized as the final goal of all educational activities and the surest index to national efficiency. Considering the models presented to us by the progressive nations of the world, the Bill, it seems to me, ought to find a place in the Statute Book of the State, for the mere asking. This is not a subject on which doctrinally, there can be two opinions at this stage of the world's advancement. The compartmentalizing of particular classes to live and toil in bestiality or ignorance, and culture as a special monopoly of the clergy, have been deservedly consigned to the niche of oblivion as vestiges of a bye-gone system of social tyranny. Education is now happily viewed as a national concern which recognizes no distinction of class or creed, and of which the responsibility of direction is understood by all civilized Governments to vest in themselves. In these circumstances, the principle of the Bill is doctrinally unassailable. Viewed from the particular stand-point of our individual State, it is amply manifest to every observer that the policy of the Government and the trend of popular inclination are both in favour of the expansion of education, to the broadest range possible. National education, by which I mean the education of the entire population, is a craving which is finding its vent even in the activities of the so-called depressed classes. And the world's history of today, on the other hand, of even the past few weeks points to the absolute necessity of constantly keeping ourselves on the *qui vive* as tangible components in the larger national fabric of the world. Everywhere and in every sphere of human activity, organization is reckoned as contributing to success; and organization signifies nothing less than training under a definite system of rules or ordinances. Every patch of peopled ground on the world's surface has to equip itself with such training as would enable it to maintain its existence amidst the conflict of empires. This is the lesson brought vividly home to us by each passing moment of the times. The moral make-up of the man to befit him for citizenship has become a business of absorbing concern to Governments. Every kind of calling in life, be it of the plough-man or cow-herd, is considered imperfect unless it has had the finish of systematic training. Nationalism is imperfect unless the component crafts or guilds or the walks and ways therein have undergone an ordained course of general or technical culture.

In this view of social progress, the Government cannot halt to consider the expediency of exercising compulsion for popularizing, rather universalizing education in the State. Though I have taken a very optimistic view regarding the people's craving for education, it must be conceded that, owing to poverty and a variety of other causes, recalcitrancy is observable and this painfully in the case of particular classes such as Poolayan, Paravan, Maravan, Marakan, Kuravan, Channan and Kammalan, which return a low percentage of literacy. These classes might feel the force of compulsion but the end aimed at, however, would justify any measure of compulsion, from the *Parans Patreii* in a good and sacred cause like the one under consideration.

According to a Western Educationist "General education is the foundation and the necessary antecedent of increased economic activity in all branches of national production—in agriculture, small industries, manufacture and commerce." He puts it to the world that the result of popular education is a more equal distribution of the proceeds of labor, contributing to the general prosperity, social peace and the development of all the powers of a nation. In view of the universal betterment that popular education is expected to achieve, any degree of compulsion would perfectly be justifiable, whatever sectional or individual inclinations may be.

Apart from the general and theoretical considerations, there is one grievous circumstance that I wish to lay prominently before the Council. Among the Native States of India, Travancore at one time occupied the forefront in the brilliancy of its educational achievements. Today, however, we are admittedly far in the background in many respects as compared with many of our Sister States. In the matter of Elementary Education, Baroda and Mysore have outstripped us altogether; while our Government have to content with glorifying themselves in the formation of an Educational Directorate and the compilation of an iron-hooped Educational Code. The new Education broom has begun to sweep clean and on the plea of efficiency and organization driven from the field a number of schools that were doing good service and discouraged the further growth of private schools to meet adequately the demands of the growing population.

In 1900, the number of schools in the State for a population of 2,95,215 was 3,680; while today for a population of 34,28,975 we have only 1,700 schools. This, it must be confessed, is symptomatic of a lamentable setback to the glorious educational activities of an early period. The prospect is still more aggravating, for the Government have openly declared a crusade against private ventures in the field of imparting education. The Government, in their Report for 1088, say "This policy of opening new schools has to be persisted in for a number of years. Till then the unrecognized schools will continue to exist and will be a source of weakness to the educational system." While this is the Government's avowed policy, the people suffer more painfully than words can describe for want of schools, and where there are schools, for paucity of accommodation therein. The State, as now geographically divided, comprises 3,955 villages which work out in the result a single school for three villages. This in the case of juveniles signifies a glaring defect, which must in time seriously effect a decadence in the intellectual development of the State.

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It is high time, therefore, to safeguard the education of the masses by express legislation. Institutions which would serve as media for advertisement would thrive without the protection of legislative embankment : but the humble little that is needed for the plough-man and the cow-boy needs the paternal protection of an enactment.

The only obstacle conceivable is the cost of carrying out the aims and objects of the Bill. The Government are already spending a large portion of their revenue on education. For the current year a sum of 17,94,000 Rs. is alloted in the budget for education and it is anticipated that the expenditure will go up to 20 lakhs when the reforms already sanctioned are fully worked out. It may be urged therefore that the opening and the maintaining of the requisite number of schools to accommodate all youths in the State would entail an expenditure which would run the State into debts unless an extra cess is levied. But it must be remembered that my learned friend Mr. Kesava Pillai does not aim at universal compulsion throughout the State all at once. The Bill reserves to Government the power to restrict its operation to select areas and to extend it gradually as "experience dictates or finances allow". There is no reason therefore to apprehend any large initial outlay. And I even doubt whether the expenditure that might be needed when the new system is in full swing would drain the financial resources of the State if they are duly husbanded.

I am sorry that I may have to state facts unpalatable to the Government while on this point. It would be more agreeable to have the question of funds threshed out at the Committee stage. I must however risk the statement that even with the twenty lakhs which the Government are now prepared to spend on Education a net work of Elementary schools may be found so as to bring a very large area under the proposed educational scheme. It is the fundamental necessaries alone, that are to be primarily cared for by the Government. The tax-payers' concern extends only to Primary Education in the main. What they now stand for is that the Government should fairly distribute the educational allotment between Primary, Secondary and Collegiate Education with due deference to the importance, necessity and the reaching range of the instruction to be imparted. Luxuries serving no useful purpose, such as the Sanskrit College, the Department for Sanskrit publications and certain other sinecures are in their eyes deplorable waste of public money. I beg respectfully to submit not as my individual opinion alone, but as voicing the opinion of every intelligent tax-payer in the State that the Government now maintain a superfluous and extravagantly remunerated controlling agency for the Educational Department. In 1080 the amount expended on controlling agency was only 33,258 Rs. The expenditure on controlling agency has now risen to 1,50,000 Rs. The doubling or tripling of the controlling staff is not educationally justifiable without a proportionate increase in the number of Schools and Colleges. The expenditure on Collegiate Education also exhibits a similar increase. From 62,056 Rs. in 1080 it has risen to 1,87,300 Rs.

The ryot is entitled as a matter of right to ask the Government to divert slices out of these allotments for what in the world's estimation forms the foundation of national existence, namely, Primary Education.

I must beg leave also to say that of recent years the expenditure on several Departments has gone on at a break-neck-pace in the name of reform and efficiency. The P. W. D. has become a bye-word for careless wastage of public money owing to the number of superior offices created without actual proof of necessity and the over-liberal scales of salary provided for the superior personnel. Anybody that has soberly watched the reorganizations of the past few years must have noticed that the bounds of reasonable proportion have been altogether transgressed. It is not beyond the power of Government to rectify matters and there is universal belief that severe economy and rigorous retrenchment would enable the Government to secure the necessary funds for floating the present scheme without the levying of any extra cess.

If the Government however should be inclined to consider the cost of compulsory education prohibitive, the people would go the extent of requesting the Government to delete the heads of Charitable Institutions from the public records and divert the funds allotted thereto to Primary Education, the highest and most sacred form of charity that the Government can ever undertake.

Mr. K. Parameswaren Pillai also supported the motion and in doing so said as follows :—

Sir,

The question of compulsory Elementary Education may be considered mainly under three heads :—

1. The need for compulsion.
2. Whether the country is yet prepared for compulsory education.
3. What is the method of work that is to be adopted.

1. The need for compulsion.

In India, at one time, education was the monopoly of a particular class. This theory was carried so far that it was thought that a member of any other class or community possessed of the knowledge of the letters was to be shunned. Thanks to the enlightening influence of western thought and learning it has been now recognised that if education is good for one community it can at any rate do no harm to the others. Further, our economic arrangements have also changed. In spite of the desperate attempts made in some quarters to set back the hands of the clock, the wheels of time are working out its inexorable will. The western economic principles of "free competition"

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and "equal opportunities" for all have levened society and it has become difficult without education for the people to adapt themselves to the altered circumstances. In spite of all that has been said in regard to the high literacy in Travancore, 85 per cent of the people have been returned as illiterate. The percentage of the literates being larger in the towns, the number of the illiterates in the country parts is most appalling. The result is that the people are sunk in ignorance, superstition and misery. They are unable to appreciate the need for sanitation, social improvement or a higher standard of living. We have not yet passed the stage of attributing diseases to supernatural causes and performing offerings to propitiate the offending Deities. The cost of Sarpaprathishtas and Sarpabalis performed for the purpose of curing certain diseases is even now to be found as recitals in documents. Universal education is the only panacea for this national evil.

If that is so, can this be achieved without a certain amount of compulsion? I decidedly think not. In spite of the activity of the Education Department, the number of boys of school-going age attending school is still very small. According to modern calculations, one-fifth of the population of a country will be children of school-age belonging to the class usually found in public Elementary Schools. At this rate, we should have nearly 7 lakhs of children of school-age. But the Administration Report of 1088 shows that the actual number under instruction in Elementary Schools was 1,88,400; the result is that about four and a half lakhs of children of school-age are not attending any school at all.

I have heard it said that this result is not due to absence of compulsion but to the want of accommodation in schools. What with the unnecessary stringency of the Education Code and the slackness of the Education Department, which year after year continues to return a lakh and a half of rupees unspent to Government out of the Budget allotment, the Government, it is true, and I am sorry to say so, have not been able to meet the demand for education adequately. The Elementary Schools are overstocked and congested and insufficient to accommodate the number of boys seeking admission. In the Quilon town Elementary school alone, I am informed on good authority, about 400 children had to be refused admission on the ground of want of accommodation. This is a very unsatisfactory state of affairs and no effort should be spared to remedy it. But even after sufficient accommodation is provided for the children willing to go to school, I have no doubt that, without a great deal of compulsion, it would be difficult to induce the parents of a large number of children, particularly of the labouring classes, the Mahomedan community, and even of some of the ignorant classes of other communities, to send their children to school. As I have already remarked, 85 per cent of the population has been returned as illiterate as per the Census of 1911. When we examine the figures more closely, we shall find that there is an uneven distribution of literacy in the several communities, so that, in some cases, the number of illiterates is almost cent percent.

	Population.		Illiterates.
Nayars	5,92,389	...	4,47,543.
Native Xians	9,01,719	...	7,36,490.
Kammalas	1,41,582	...	1,21,414.
Ezhavas	5,46,265	...	4,91,073.
Chanans	1,66,195	...	1,56,989.
Mussalmans	2,26,617	...	2,05,275.
Pulayas	1,85,314	...	1,83,818.
Kuravas	61,827	...	61,414.

In this list, I have confined myself to numerically the most important communities in the State. It shows how low the literacy is in respect of certain communities, and how unwilling they are to avail themselves of the facilities afforded them. This is further evidenced by the smallness of the number of children belonging to these communities actually attending schools. In the Mussalman community, according to the Administration Report of 1088, out of 45,000 children of school-age, there are only 4,959 children actually attending school. Out of the 37,000 Pulaya children, only 1,290, and among the Kuravas, out of 13,000 children, only 107, are attending schools. No amount of facilities can induce the parents of these children to send them to school and a great deal of compulsion will be required in their case. It cannot therefore be disputed that there will be need of compulsion if we desire to have every child of school-going age attending school.

2. *Whether the country is yet prepared for compulsory education.*

Year after year, the Members of the Popular Assembly have been bringing forward for the consideration of the Government, the subject of Elementary Education. In their addresses to the Dewan at the Ninth Session of the Assembly, the Members said, "We desire to bring to your notice that in many taluks, the number of the Elementary Schools is now quite insufficient to meet the demand, and we are looking forward to a large increase in the number of those schools all over the State, so that every kara may have equal facilities for the education of its children. This would prepare the ground to make Primary Education compulsory". At the last meeting of the Nayar Samajam, the principle of compulsory education was approved by a unanimous resolution of the meeting. So far as the people are concerned, therefore, there is a general consensus of opinion in favour of the measure. The question therefore is as to whether the Government are prepared to undertake the task. As far as I am able to see it is purely a question of finance and it will depend upon what solution we can offer of this intricate question of finance.

The Education Budget has reached the comparatively high figure of 16 lakhs, though the actual expenditure of 1088 was only about 14 lakhs. The net expenditure for Elementary Educa-

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tion in 1088 was Rs. 6,55,665. The accommodation provided with this expenditure was only for 1,88,400 children *i. e.*, less than one-third of the number of the children of school-going age. At this rate, we shall have to find annually not less than 19 lakhs of rupees for providing accommodation for the full number of those children. If we add to this the extraordinary expenditure of feeding the necessitous children, clothing them and purchasing for them the necessary books and stationery, the total cost might amount to something like 20 or 21 lakhs. The question is, are we in a position to find this money ? No doubt a great deal of straining of our resources might be necessary, but still, if we set our minds upon it, it should not be difficult for the State to devise some means whereby this demand could be adequately met. It should be possible to spend a large amount of money on Elementary Education even from the General Revenues of the State. The Education Department has not been working up to the Budget allotment and for the last few years, every year, more than a lakh and a half rupees has been lapsing to the Government. So, even if we keep up to the full allotment, we can devote a lakh and a half rupees more to the extension of Elementary Education. The Budget allotment itself may be increased to some extent, say something to 18 or 20 lakhs, and in that way, we can find from the General Revenues itself, not less than five lakhs of rupees more for this purpose. It may be possible to indicate other sources also from which Government might find the sinews of war. The State Charities, in spite of retrenchment, even now consume about Rs. 3,59,296. This fund could legitimately be devoted to the promotion of Primary Education. These charities were instituted originally for the maintenance of learning and education; for the recipients were supposed to devote themselves to keeping alive the torch of learning. It has now not only ceased to be so but these charities encourage only idleness, vice and crime. We shall not be deviating therefore from the original purposes of these institutions if we use these funds for the advancement of mass education.

Our Devaswoms are said to be the depositories of untold treasures ; what their extent is I cannot say. But there is no doubt that we shall be able to find a considerable amount of money there. These temples now belong to the Government and their funds are at their absolute disposal. I propose free borrowing from these funds. Both the temples and the cause of education will be benefitted by this proposal. Loans are now made from Sree Padmanabhaswami temple to private individuals. Why not the State take advantage of that ?

Further, this is one of the directions in which money is spent by the followers of other religious persuasions, *e. g.*, in the case of the Christians, you will hardly find a single church to which a school is not attached and maintained out of the church funds.

Our forests are said to be an inexhaustible source of wealth. From a purely financial standpoint, the administration of our forests has not been so far a success. The income from the forests is not commensurate with the extent of our Reserves. This has been the subject of complaint in the Sri Mulam Popular Assembly year after year. More than a third of the area of the State, namely, 2,337 Sq. miles, are Reserved Forests. The net revenue from this in

1083	...	was Rs. 1,65,338.
1084	...	„ 2,75,301.
1085	...	„ 2,21,254.
1086	...	„ 3,14,495.
1087	...	„ 2,33,383.
1088	...	„ 5,42,601.

The apparent increase in the net revenue of 1088 was not due to any permanent development of the forests, but to the running up of the tariff rates of timber, although the Government would have it that " the increase of the revenue has been brought about by a careful and a scientific development of the sources of income, without trenching in any way on the capital wealth of the forests". But we are not enlightened as to what this " careful and scientific development of the sources of income " consisted in. The Conservator, however, does not lay claim to any such scientific development, for, according to him, the chief causes of the increase of the revenue were :— (1) the closing of the monopoly contract with Messrs. Wallibhoy Katherbhoy & Co., for the purchase of teak and blackwood from the water depots of the State, (2) the enhancement of the tariff rate of royal timber, and (3) the abolition of the export duty on timber. None of these, to my mind, amounts to a "scientific development of the resources of the forests". Any how, it is gratifying to know that the Government accept the view that the resources of our forests are capable of a scientific development and they entertain the hope that it should be possible to sustain and develop the revenue still further in future years. If these pledges of the Conservator are redeemed and the hopes of Government realised, it should be possible to find a large portion of the money we require from the forest revenue itself, otherwise it would seem foolish to maintain such large Reserves merely for their indirect doubtful advantages.

Out of the allotment for Education, only about a third is now spent on Elementary Education. Secondary Education is almost self-supporting, the net expenditure on that in 1087 being only Rs. 22,191. Collegiate Education seems to have consumed in 1088, Rs. 1,39,058. Taking into consideration that a large portion of this money is spent in maintaining the Physical and Chemical Laboratories, paying teachers for those branches which teach one or two students annually, one cannot but deplore the expenditure incurred in this direction. The College itself is overmanned, the average work of a professor being less than 8 or 10 hours a week. Economy in these directions would save for the Government a few thousands of rupees which may be utilised for Elementary Education.

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Further, I am unable to appreciate the wisdom, as has been rightly pointed out, of spending a great deal of money upon buildings, equipments, &c., for Secondary and Collegiate Education. Economy in these directions is urgently needed.

I would also impress upon the Government the necessity for encouraging private enterprise in this direction. Partly owing to the stringency of some of the provisions of the Education Code and partly also to the Elementary Education having been made free, private Elementary Schools are decreasing in number year after year. In 1087, the Director of Public Instruction reported that the private schools declined both in number and in strength by 134 and 7,351 respectively. The total decrease in the number of private schools was 168, out of which 134 were Elementary Schools. Though 181 new Departmental schools were started in the year, the net increase in schools was only 47, as the remaining went to substitute the private schools which became defunct. In 1088, private schools fell again both in number and in strength from 944 and 65,043 to 880 and 63,976. The fall was wholly among private unaided schools. Although there was an increase of 122 in the number of Departmental schools, the net increase was only 58, as 64 private schools have ceased to exist. This gives us some insight into the magnitude of the evil resulting from the discouragement of private enterprises. Some of the provisions of the Education Code, particularly those relating to accommodation and strength, press hard on the Managers of private schools. In a country like Travancore, where the atmospheric temperature rarely falls below 80 degree F., where walls are not necessary for schools, and even where there are walls, the doors and windows could be left open during all parts of the day and in all seasons of the year, too much insistence upon house room would seem to indicate an inadequate appreciation of local conditions. A proper roof and a well-paved floor need alone be insisted upon for the protection of the health of the boys. Relaxation of these Rules might bring forward a large number of private Managers to open private schools which will be a great relief to Government.

Having endeavoured to indicate some of the existing sources which we might exploit for this purpose, I might also be allowed to point out that it would not be wrong if Government, as a last resort, and after all other resources have been fully tapped, levied some kind of Educational cess from certain classes of His Highness' subjects, who, while enjoying the benefits of a civilised Government, are free from the necessity to contribute towards their cost. The Jenmies of the State receiving large michavaroms are bound to contribute decently towards the education of their tenants. Similarly, the factory owners and other employers of labour, the merchants, the lawyers, Government officials and other people who earn large incomes, might also be legitimately required to contribute towards the additional expenditure which the Government will have to incur. The already overtaxed agricultural and labouring classes should be wholly exempted from any such cesses, and the cess itself should be so levied and with such safe-guards that its incidents may not eventually be shifted to the shoulders of the agriculturists and labourers. It should not be difficult for statesmanship to manage that.

Lastly, I wish to say a word about the method of work. I do not expect Government to make education compulsory all over the State at once. But a genuine attempt must be made to ascertain the existing accommodation in each kara and what further accommodation is necessary to enable Government to provide for the education of all the children of school-going age of that kara. School Boards may be appointed to co-operate with Government officials in this work. Earnest efforts should be made to provide the additional accommodation that is required, and when that is complete, the law can be extended to that kara. Groups of karas may be taken for treatment in this manner and gradually the work may be extended. This might take some years, say, something like ten years, before the work is complete, but it does not matter so long as it is intended earnestly and sincerely to extend the provisions of the Bill to all parts of the State. It is our devout wish that, in His Highness the Maha Raja's reign, during which so much progress in all directions has been made in this State, and in your administration, the light of education may burn in and illuminate every hamlet and cottage.

Mr. K. G. Parameswara Menon said that he had very great pleasure in supporting the principle of the Bill. He said that the need for compulsion would be admitted by all, when it was considered that, if there were one hundred persons to receive education, it would certainly be better to give it to all the one hundred than to ten or twelve out of that number, but that to give it to *all* the one hundred would require some form of compulsion to be brought into play. Seeing that the Government were using compulsion in some form or other in all the measures that they enacted, it might, he said, with advantage be used in promoting the welfare of its people. Mr. Parameswara Menon added that he was not going to discuss, as some of his friends had done, the means that the Government had or the measures that they should adopt, in raising the funds required for the purpose. He would only say that the object aimed at was so very essential to the welfare of the people that the Government must find the necessary means for the purpose, without, at the same time, imposing any cess on the people on that account.

Mr. C. P. Thomas said as follows in support of the Bill:—

Sir,

The idea of universal education in a State is so fascinating and inspiring to those who are really interested in the general welfare of society, that one cannot but be moved by some enthusiasm in dealing with the subject. But, although the subject may lend itself to a sort of visionary enthusiasm, it is neither just nor wise for practical statesmen to delegate it to the region of impracticable

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ideals fit only for the platform of the demogogue. Like several other ideas once regarded as too idealistic for practical politics, this has also been accepted and is being gradually acted upon in most of the civilized States of the world. The learned mover of the Bill as well as my other learned colleague Mr. Sesha Iyer have pleaded very soberly yet strongly for the cause, so as to persuade us to accept the principle of the Bill for the legislative activity of the Council.

In begging to support the principle of the Bill I wish to make a few general remarks on the subject.

There are two chief objections that are raised against this measure. The one is that, people in this State have been so ready to avail themselves of the provisions now made for popular education that there is no call for the introduction of the machinery of compulsion. My first answer to this is that the progress that we have been making is not fast enough, as it is only less than 40 per cent of the youth of the school-going age actually attend school. If universal education of at least the Primary or Lower Grade Elementary Grade is our goal and no civilized Government can be satisfied with less—at this rate we shall be long before we approach it. Again, I say that, so far as the people are willing to take advantage of the existing provisions, compulsion will not do them any harm: the law is only for those who are reluctant; and such would remain so unless compelled. Even in England, owing to various considerations, the principle of compulsion was not accepted for long but they had to do so, if they wanted universal education. The immediate needs of the body are so pressing that without coercion a good many would not provide for the less insistent demands of the higher self—the mind. So long as we measure the progress of a State by the increase of its population and its physical welfare, it would be an imperative duty of the State to ensure the intellectual and moral development of the people as well. To leave the masses in ignorance will surely bring its reckoning on society in some form or other. It may not be in the shape of the brutalities of social and political upheavals like the French Revolution, but it will be a clog in the wheel of progress, nay, a source of constant trouble and suffering, both material and moral, to the body politic as well as its head. Thus it is a duty of Government to bring about a state of universal popular education by working on proper lines: and the introduction of compulsion is a step in the right direction.

The next objection is that of finances. Once granting that the cause of universal education is supremely important, I beg to say, Sir, that it is a duty of Government, which it may not well shirk, to find the funds. Say, if you will, that the cause is comparatively less momentous; that it does not in the economy of the State deserve to be better provided for than now contemplated. The position, I admit, is logical. But, to admit in words its supreme importance and withdraw from the necessary steps on the plea of lack of funds is not justifiable. It is a sad fact that we admit in words the great importance of the educational and religious factor in the well-being of society. But, when it comes to the question of spending on that account, we are guided by considerations far from consistent with our professions. (But let us be more sincere in our professions). It has been alleged that a careful examination of the finances of the State would show the possiblity of readjusting items of expenditure by fairer evaluation of public needs, in such a way as to allow more funds for Primary Education. I am not in a position to prove by facts and figures such an allegation. But I can say that, if it be so, it would be a serious omission to leave it like that. We are confronted by the large amount spent on education. But, of the more than the 12 lacs spent on education, only something more than two lacs go for Primary or Lower Grade Elementary Education. I for one cannot belittle the importance of either Secondary or Collegiate Education. Yet I would not advocate a policy of fairly starving Primary Education for the cause of Secondary or Collegiate Education, though I would not pretend to be able to lay down a due proportion of the sum spent on Primary Education to that on Higher Education. But I make bold to say that the proportion now obtaining is far too low.

Another point with regard to the expenditure is that the Bill does not entail upon Government any exhorbitant outlay in the near future. It is only a permissive Bill: and a few areas may be selected. It will place before the Government as well as the people the ideal of universal and therefore compulsory education and also lay upon Government a moral obligation to make a genuine effort to apply the Bill in a few selected areas. Its working in a few places will make the people familiarized with the idea and make the way easier for its gradual introduction in new centres as time elapses. In selecting areas, either the more important towns may be chosen, or those taluks or smaller units where the proportion of literates or the pupils is low.

There are one or two other objections that are put forward against this measure. It is argued that the present system of literary education is an evil as it dislocates the economic structure of society. The youth become unfit for ordinary callings of life. Again, the merely intellectual training is productive of evil, in so far as it gives new weapons and facilities for the people in the paths of unrighteousness. But I say, even granting the argument is based on some truth, it proves too much. Accepting it, we have to cry halt to all our progress along the path of popular education: nay we should retrace our steps. But who will advocate that?. No, what is good enough for the large number of pupils, who voluntarily come for the present system of education, is good enough also for those who would not come unless compelled. If a reform of our present system of Elementary Education, whether from the economic or the moral stand-point, is needful, let us boldly set to work for effecting it.

Another position taken is to compare ourselves with British India If a comparison is made, it should be not with British India or any of its Provinces, but with Baroda. In this connection, I am reminded of an answer given to me by our late Director of Public Instruction, when I complained that some of the standards contemplated in the new Code were higher than those of British

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India. "But why" said he "should we be tied down by what is done in British India, why not we in Travancore get the best we can? If we look at the best institutions and copy the weak point from each, our institution will not be given much credit, no more than an individual who builds his character by incorporating into it the weak points in the character of some of the greatest men". In fact there are several grounds why we need not and should not be guided in this matter by British India. Indeed we have already taken one step in advance, by making Primary Education free. And it is not too early to take the next step, however cautiously it may be done. I would refer to one aspect of the introduction of this Bill. As far as we can gauge public opinion in the State, whether by means of the Press or the Popular Assembly, the idea has not only been never opposed, but rather welcomed. It may be urged that the masses, who will be really affected, have not expressed their opinion. But have we been guided by the opinions of the masses in such matters or by that of those occupying a higher intellectual level? While their opinion may not be a guide, their truest interest will be the aim of the Government. And universal education is necessary for their highest good. Of the many diadems, Sir, that have added to the glory of the Crown, Our Gracious Sovereign, the educational progress made during His Highness' illustrious Reign is one of the brightest. And if this step for the consummation of universal education is ever to be taken in the State, it is most appropriate that it should come now as a crowning measure of His Highness most liberal educational policy. With these words I beg to accept the general principle of the Bill and support the motion of my friend Mr. Kesava Pillai.

Mr. V. Subba Iyer.—

SIR,

When the Mover of the Bill applied for leave to introduce a Bill to make better provision for the extension of Elementary Education in Travancore, objection was raised to the granting of leave, that, the schools in the State being overcrowded, the measure will affect the Public Revenue of the State and therefore the Mover ought to have obtained the previous sanction in writing of the Dewan in accordance with Clause (a) of the first Proviso of Section 12 of the Legislative Council Regulation V of 1073. My learned friend, the Mover, replied to say that no obligation was created on the Government to establish new schools and the only obligation imposed by the law was on parents to send their children to *existing* schools within a specified area. The draft Bill was not before the Council then. Permission was, therefore, granted with the reservation that, when the principle would come up for consideration, the Bill might be rejected, if it should be found that the proposed law would be unworkable, or would have the effect of subjecting the Government to any additional responsibility or expenditure, which they were not prepared for. The draft Bill has now been under the consideration of Government for sometime and I regret to state that it is not acceptable to the Government. To avoid any misconception on the subject, I may state at the outset that the Government are not opposed to the expansion of mass education. That illiteracy in the land should be broken down is well recognised by the Government. The goal is towards universal education and though in the words of His Excellency the Viceroy "It is still far distant when every boy and girl and every young man and maiden shall have an education on what is best calculated to qualify them for their own part in life and for the good of the community as a whole. This is an ideal we must all put forth before us." How far this ideal has been kept up will appear if I draw the attention of the Council to the remarkable progress that has been achieved in education in Travancore during His Highness's ever memorable Reign. In 1060, there were 252 Government schools and 632 private schools, or 884 schools in all, the total number of pupils under instruction being 46,635. In 1088, the number of Government schools was 828 and that of private recognised schools 935, or 1,763 in all, the total number of pupils being 2,04,971. The percentage of pupils to the school-going population was 21 in the case of boys and 5 in the case of girls in 1059. The percentage in the former rose to 50 and in the latter 22 in 1088. As for the expenditure, while it was only less than 2 lakhs of rupees in 1059 it amounted in 1088 to Rs. 13 lakhs and in 1089 to Rs. 16½ lakhs.

The progress that has been made will compare very favourably with the progress in education made in the several provinces in British India or Native States.

Taking literacy first, it will be found that, according to the Census of 1911, only 5·8 per cent of the total population can read and write in the whole of British India. It is 6¼ per cent in Mysore, 10 per cent in Baroda while in Cochin and Travancore it is 15 per cent.

If we take the literacy of males alone into consideration we find that it is

10 per cent in the whole of India.
6 per cent in the United Provinces.
6·5 per cent in the Punjab.
6·8 per cent in the Central Provinces.
11·1 per cent in Mysore.
11·3 per cent in Bombay.
11·7 per cent in Bengal.
13·7 per cent in Madras.
16·6 per cent in Baroda.
24·3 per cent in Cochin
25 per cent in Travancore

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So far as literacy is concerned, Travancore has every reason to be proud of the progress achieved.

Passing on to the number of educational institutions, we find that there is one institution in.

Bombay	for every	11 sq. miles,
Mysore	for every	6·4 sq. miles.
Eastern Bengal and Assam	for every	6·3 sq. miles.
Madras	,,	5·9 ,,
Bengal	,,	3·4 ,,
Baroda	,,	2·5 ,,
Travancore	,,	2·2 ,,

I may add that in Cochin there is one school for every one and a half sq. miles, due probably to the proportionately larger number of private schools and to the smaller extent of forest area.

In the above statistics the number of private unrecognised schools in Travancore is also taken into consideration as is done in British Provinces and other States.

Taking next the percentage of the number of pupils under instruction to the school-going population, we find that it is

13·8 in the United Provinces.
14·5 in the Punjab.
18 in Mysore.
19·1 in Burma.
28·1 in Bengal.
28·1 in Madras.
29·7 in Eastern Bengal and Assam.
44·4 in Cochin.
50 in Travancore.
55 in Baroda.

If we take into consideration the percentage of the total cost on education to the gross revenue of the various Native States, it is as follows :—

7¼ per cent in Baroda.
7½ per cent in Mysore.
8 per cent in Cochin.
11 per cent in Travancore.

The above figures bear ample testimony to the determination of His Highness' Government to banish illiteracy from the land. The proposed Bill is objected to therefore not on the ground that the Government are against compulsion, but on the ground that it is extremely ineffective for securing the object in view. It may be said against the Bill that there are so many exemptions provided as to make it practically unworkable. This objection receives considerable support from a statement contained in one of the Administration Reports of Baroda that the number of applications for exemption in one year was 17,336 and the number of prosecutions was 7,408. Apart from this there is the fact that the Bill does not make any provision to ensure the organisation of a sufficient number of new schools. We are not concerned with an academic discussion about the theory of compulsory education but with the feasibility of the proposed measure as a practical piece of legislation. The Bill, if passed, would have no effect so far as the progress of Primary Education is concerned. A few figures will bear out my statement. A talukwar statement showing the number of schools Departmental, aided and unaided, the extent of accommodation available and the number of pupils attending the school was called for. I won't tire the Council by reading the figures for all the taluks but would content myself by the totals for the whole State.

Number of Departmental Schools		580.
Total Strength	...	99,796.
Total accommodation available is for	...	95,585.
Aided schools	...	762.
Total strength	...	57,101.
Total accommodation	...	71,833.
Unaided schools	...	31.
Total strength	...	1,324.
Total accommodation	...	2,367.

And if we take a total of all the schools, we find that in 1,373 schools there is accommodation for 1,69,785 and the strength is 1,58,221. Unrecognised schools are left out of account in the above calculation. From the above figures it will be found that the Departmental schools are overcrowded whereas in the case of private institutions there is some accommodation for a few more. The existing schools taken as a whole are almost full, the percentage being 93·5 and no compulsion to send pupils to *existing schools* is necessary. Unless more Departmental schools are opened, the Bill if passed into law will remain a dead letter. It may be within the knowledge of the Members of the Council that Primary Education in the 1st 3 classes in the State is free, and private enterprise which

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will give education on approved lines will not therefore be forth-coming. If the Bill is passed, it is the duty of the Government to see that it does not remain a dead letter marring the Statute Book. It behoves them whether they will or not to enforce the Regulation and open more schools. This naturally leads us to the question how many more schools will have to be opened and what will be the cost of the same, recurring and non-recurring. The number of pupils having instruction in unrecognised schools is 54,449. These schools are fast disappearing as they are merely venture schools started on commercial basis. The introduction of free Primary Education and of the Educational Code has given a death blow to these institutions. The buildings in which these schools are held are not up to the standard and the quality of education imparted is low. The moment a Departmental school is opened it is full and the cry is for more schools. Leaving these schools out of consideration, the total number of pupils receiving instruction in recognised Elementary Schools is, as has been already pointed out, 1,58,221. In some of the boys' schools there are girls receiving instruction. The figure also includes the strength of the higher classes of Elementary Schools. As the Bill is at present intended for boys between 5 and 10, deductions have to be made under the above heads. This gives us a strength of 1,21,389 boys. According to the latest Census, the number of boys in the State between 5 and 10 will be 2,30,525. Accommodation has therefore to be provided for all of them. All the Elementary Schools do not contain all the four classes. The additional accommodation required could be provided for by opening more classes in the existing incomplete schools and by starting new schools. According to the figures furnished by the Director of Public Instruction the initial outlay for additional accommodation under the above two heads is 12,26,800 and the recurring expenditure is 5 lakhs. In the 5 lakhs, the cost of additional inspecting agency or the cost of training teachers has not been taken into account. Including the cost under these two heads, the recurring expenditure is likely to be 6 lakhs. The Director has given the lowest possible estimate. That this is so will appear from the fact that, if the Bill becomes law, provision has to be made for 1,09,106 boys more. The Honourable Mr. Gokhale would put down the cost at a moderate figure of 5 Rs. per head. There was strong opposition in the Imperial Council on this head, some suggesting Rs. 10 and others Rs. 7 as. 8, per head. Even if we take the lowest figure given by Mr. Gokhale, I think the recurring expenditure of 6 lakhs may be taken to be correct. The question therefore arises, are we in a position to find funds for this additional expenditure from the existing revenues of the State? I have already stated that in 1089 the expenditure on Education was 16½ lakhs or 11 per cent of the total revenue, the highest spent by any Native State. The Budget for the current year is 18 lakhs though the gross revenue is practically the same, and I believe the expenditure will very soon come to 20 lakhs or 13·5 per cent of the gross revenue even if no additional schools are opened. The expenditure on Education could not in fairness be increased consistently with the other demands on the State Exchequer. Have we not gone far enough? And is it desirable and just to spend more out of the general tax-payer's money? The Mover of the Bill and the other Non-official Members will certainly not advocate the expansion of Primary Education to the sacrifice of Secondary, Collegiate, Technical or Industrial Education. I note that the Non-official Members have not concurrently suggested any measure for raising the additional amount required. It may be said that the education of the masses is a duty cast upon the State but is it not true that Primary Education is now regarded to be an obligatory duty of Municipalties and Local Fund Boards? I am supported in this statement by the Honourable Mr. Gokhale who said in moving the Bill in the Imperial Legislative Council "The practice "of the whole civilised world points out that a part of the burden must be borne by the local bodies. "There is only one exception as far as I am aware, and that is Ireland, where almost the entire cost "of Elementary Education comes from the Imperial Exchequer. They have given this special "treatment to Ireland, because for a long time Ireland has complained of being treated with great "financial injustice under the arrangement that has been in existence since the Act of Union was "passed more than a century ago. If we take the whole of the United Kingdom, we find that the "local bodies there bear on the whole about a third of the total cost. It is the same in France. "And in other countries, the local proportion is still larger. I cannot therefore see how "anybody can reasonably urge that the whole cost of compulsion should be borne by the Central "Government." This principle has been adopted in British India and the Municipalities and Local Fund District Boards are under the enactments in force bound to show a certain proportion of their income derived from local taxation towards the cost of Primary Education. The Local Fund Boards manage schools and also give grants to private institutions. The total amount spent on Education in British India in 1912 was a crore and 79 lakhs: out of this 65·6 per cent was met out of the public funds, 22·6 per cent from fees, and 11·6 per cent from other private funds such as subscriptions, endowments and the like. The public funds are made up of the amounts contributed by Government and by Local Boards and Municipalities. The proportion may be roughly taken to be two-thirds and one-third, so that, out of the 65·6 per cent spent from public funds 44 per cent alone is spent by the Government. Taking Mysore and Baroda in which compulsory education has been introduced, we find that they get contribution from Local Boards and Municipalities. In Mysore the figures are as follow :—

Out of a total expenditure of 20 lakhs on Education, 60·1 per cent is out of the State funds. 19·6 per cent goes from Local Funds and Municipalities. 9·1 per cent from fees. 11·2 per cent from other sources. The total cost on Primary Education in Mysore is roughly 3 lakhs.

In Baroda, according to the latest Administration Report, out of a total expenditure of 15 lakhs on Education, 9½ lakhs are spent on Primary Education. There are Local Boards in Baroda levying a local cess and deriving income from other sources. Out of a local cess of 7¾ lakhs collected by the Boards they are bound to pay one-third to the Government towards the cost of Primary

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Education. I may in passing remark that the incidence of taxation is very heavy in Baroda. It is about Rs. 9 per head of population excluding local cess, whereas in Travancore it is less than Rs. 4 per head.

From the above analysis it will be clear that British Provinces, Mysore and Baroda receive a substantial support from Local Boards which are authorised to levy a local cess. According to the Budget for the current year the expenditure on Primary Education is 10 lakhs and odd distributed as follows :—

	Rs.
Departmental Elementary Schools under the heads of establishment, reserve, staff and contingencies.	6,93,000
Grants-in-aid.	2,00,000
Inspection of Elementary Schools.	97,000
Training institutions.	24,000
Total.....	10,14,000

Out of this amount, the fee income expected from the higher classes of Elementary Schools is only Rs. 60,000, which works out at 6 per cent; the remaining 94 per cent is met out of State funds. We have no Local Fund Boards to assist us nor subscriptions or endowments to supplement State funds.

When the Honourable Mr. Gokhale introduced his Bill, he made a distinct provision in the Bill empowering Local Boards to impose an additional cess and expressed his willingness to have an additional taxation imposed on the people. In dealing with the Non-official objections to his Bill, he said:—"The first argument is that, while there is no objection to compulsion itself, the levy of a "special education rate where it would be necessary, would be most objectionable. Well, My "Lord, I must say to that, if we merely want compulsion but are not prepared to make any sacri- "fices for the benefits that would accrue from it to the mass of our people, the sooner we give up "talking about securing universal education the better." There is no provision in the draft Bill similar to the provision found in Mr. Gokhale's Bill. Nor is there a concurrent assurance from the Non-official Members in support of the Bill as the Honourable Mr. Jinnah gave, when he said in supporting Mr. Gokhale's Bill, "I ask the Government I say, find the money ; if necessary, tax the people." In fact the main question is a question of funds. There is no provision in the Bill for raising the requisite funds and there is no concurrent assurance on behalf of the people that they are willing for additional taxation. Before concluding I would say a word about Compulsory Education Acts in Baroda and Mysore. In Mysore the Bill was passed only recently. In Baroda the whole thing is in an experimental stage even now and the following quotation from one of the Administration Reports of Baroda sounds a significant note of warning.

"Upon the Baroda Compulsory Education system curious eyes have been turned from every direction. The truth is that, while it is by no means an assured success, it is a praiseworthy attempt with an excellent chance of final success if *money is freely* spent and vigilence ceaselessly exercised. If these two last conditions are not satisfied, the attempt will be a failure."

Sir, In the Blue Book containing the decennial report of the moral and material progress and condition of India submitted to the Imperial Parliament last year we find it stated that Travancore "takes a leading place in the matter of education." It will be the earnest endeavour of Government to continue to lead and retain the high level of efficiency in the matter of education. At the same time, it has to be said, that for the reasons above stated the Bill is ineffective and unworkable. I would therefore move for the rejection of the Bill.

Mr. K. V. Rengaswami Iyengar, in seconding the proposition moved by Mr. Subba Iyer, spoke as follows :—

Sir,

The Mover and the other learned Non-official Members, who have followed him, have urged with much eloquence that the Bill before us should be accepted. And, on the other side, the learned Head Sirkar Vakil has, with an equal opulence of argument and statistical detail, opposed the passing of the measure. Further, the principles underlying the Bill have been before the Indian public for some years, and what has to be said *anew* for or against any of those principles may now be taken as negligible. In view of the exhaustive manner in which the whole question has been treated both within the Council today, by my learned colleagues, and without the Council, it would appear unnecessary for me to intervene in the debate. Nevertheless, Sir, I propose to say a few words as I feel that on an occasion like this, when so important a measure concerning education is up for consideration, the only schoolmaster in the Council, who happens also to be an Official, should not be content with merely recording a silent vote.

At the very outset may I state my own general position? And, before I do so, may I say how refreshing, how great a pleasure, it has been to me—as a school master—to listen to the elaborate and eloquent pleas of my colleagues for the spread of education? In the wake of their brilliant periods, I fear that the definition of my own attitude towards the question

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would sound quite tame. *I am a whole-hearted believer in the desirability of universal Elementary Education.* I further consider that, in the conditions of India to-day, such education may well be *free* also as it *is* in Travancore. In regard, however, to the necessity or the desirability of applying *compulsion*, I must affirm that, notwithstanding the sweeping assurances to the contrary from my Non-official colleagues, there *is*, and has ever been, a considerable volume of opinion—and opinion entitled to be heard with respect too—against *any* resort to compulsion, especially in areas—such as ours in Travancore—where the desire for education is so widespread and intense that what appears to be required is not a provision to force *all* children, who are eligible, to attend school, but one that would compel *some* of them to abstain from school, till more schools are provided. The figures given by Mr. Subba Aiyar have shown how largely our schools are crowded, and, in view of the statement made at a previous meeting of our Council by the learned Mover that *his* information was that the existing Elementary Schools, were not, everywhere full, and that often *influence* had to be brought to bear on parents to send their children to school, I am particularly glad to have heard to-day the instances of grievous overcrowding in our schools and of the inadequacy of their number to the demand, instances drawn from his own neighbourhood, given by another Non-official colleague, Mr. Parameswaran Pillai. The question is, however, one of facts and I am content to leave it to the Members to reconcile any difference in their information regarding the adequacy of the schools to the number seeking admission.

Notwithstanding all this, Sir, I would go so far as to admit that, even in such areas as ours, compulsion, even if superfluous, *may* not do any great harm, while conceivably it *may* prove helpful in spreading education in certain tracts or within certain communities.

In short, I would welcome, Sir, any carefully thought out and *practicable* measure of reform which would have the effect of gradually spreading Elementary Education among the entire people, and which would guarantee *steady* and *continuous* educational *advance*. To put it concretely, a measure on the lines of Mr. Gokhale's justly famous Elementary Education Bill would *generally* meet my wishes.

Now, in regard to the Bill before us to-day, it seems to me that, while it has a superficial resemblance—a resemblance suggesting *in parts* almost an identity—to Mr. Gokhale's Bill, it is still, *taken as a whole*, distinctly different from the measure introduced before the Imperial Legislative Council, and that too, not in matters of petty and negligible detail which could be modified or corrected at the Committee stage, but in *essential* and fundamental principles. I say this, Sir, with some emphasis, since I have heard to-day with pleasure the frequent citing by my non-official colleagues of the authority of Mr. Gokhale and of his second, my friend Mr. Srinivasa Sastriar.

In speaking of his own Bill, Mr. Gokhale insisted—and his followers insist—on *four* of its features, which were considered to be *vital*. These were: the resort to *compulsion*; the *gradual* introduction of compulsion; the vesting of the *initiative* for the introduction of compulsion on local bodies; and the contribution from *local* rates to the cost of the reform. In regard to these, it would be evident that in a small and compact State, like ours, the third feature, *viz*, *local* initiative, would be unnessary, since the Government have ordinarily as much facility—I say this deliberately as against Non-official statements to the contrary on public platforms—for knowing intimately local conditions and needs, as any local body or any elected representative of the people may have. But, of the remaining three features, the *last i. e.*, the contribution from local rates or from local taxation to the cost of mass education—was the *one* feature that Mr. Gokhale and his supporters have always laid most stress on, and that, very *wisely*, as it was their aim that the scheme which they advocated should prove *effective*, and not merely remain on the Statute Book as an enabling law waiting *indefinitely* for the conditions which would make it practicable to bring it into operation. Mr. Gokhale recognized that the problem was essentially one of finance, and he courageously attempted to face the financial issues raised by his Bill. "I feel very strongly" he said almost at the outset "that if Primary Education is ever to be made compulsory, local bodies will have to bear a fairly large share of the burden it will impose. Enlarging on the fiscal aspect of his measure he said again:—"It is not the cess that will constitute the real difficulty. It will be the share [coming out of general taxation] that will have to be borne by Government." Mr. Bhupendranath Basu, in supporting Mr. Gokhale, and even when deprecating additional *local* taxation, said on the same occasion—"The element of taxation *must* come in. Is it possible to educate our people on nothing? That is what we have to consider." It was noteworthy that not only did a large and responsible volume of public opinion support the scheme of Mr. Gokhale for financing the reform, by additional taxation, but that in Madras, the local bodies, almost entirely, were in favour of the education cess he proposed.

I am particularly desirous of stressing this aspect of this Bill now before us. When I studied the Bill it certainly did not seem accidental that the *one* obivious, essential and logical condition for making the proposal *effective* should have been missing in it. I find today that I was not wrong in my surmise. For, in spite of the frequency with which my learned colleagues have quoted the opinions of Mr. Gokhale and Mr. Srinivasa Sastriar they have declared

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themselves, with practical unanimity and with vigor, against the levying of any additional tax for the purpose of financing the proposed reform. How the omission of the financial Clauses in our Bill is being understood by the public outside is shown by the uncompromising and unfaltering position taken by the public bodies, newspapers and public men—to whose opinion the Mover has referred for support—against any additional taxation—general or local—that may be necessitated by the enforcement of the Bill, when it becomes a law. It may be argued—though it has not been done so to-day—that the Mysore Regulation says nothing about further taxation for Elementary Education and that this Bill only copies the Mysore law. But is there not a difference? The Mysore Regulation was initiated by the Darbar who may be presumed to have provided for financing the scheme, or to have reserved the power to inaugurate in due course such financial measures as would be necessitated by putting the new law into force. Further, as the learned Head Sirkar Vakil has appositely pointed out, Mysore *has* been aiding education from local rates, even from *before* the inauguration of compulsary education in the State.

We all know, Sir, that taxation in any form is disagreeable, as all compulsory contributions must be. A tax is undoubtedly an evil, but it is often a necessary evil. If the State can do without taxation, and can have reforms without adding to its taxation, it would be a very good thing indeed. But such luck is rare. The only consideration for practical men is to decide which is the greater evil—an additional and necessary tax or going without some essential good, like for instance Primary Education,—and to suffer the smaller evil for the purpose of avoiding the greater. If this be so, generally, may I ask whether it can be said that the extension of Elementary Education to the masses in Travancore can be accomplished without *additional* cost? Mr. Subba Aiyar does not naturally share the optimism of the learned Mover in regard to the finances of the State, and has been at pains to demonstrate how largely the present equilibrium of our finances would be upset by carrying out the proposed measure in its fulness, from the existing resources. And the force of his contention has practically been conceded by every Member who has spoken on the subject and suggested retrenchment et cetera. It has been argued—as I anticipated it would be—that the Departmental Estimate of the cost of the reform is high because the Departmental standard of efficiency is higher than it need be, and that the scheme can be carried out at less than the estimated cost. We have heard of the needlessness of costly buildings, of the famous precept about holding classes on verandahs, about luxuries having to make way for necessaries and so forth. As I said, this was a position I was prepared to see taken. For, a significant omission in the present Bill as compared with Mr. Gokhale's Bill, is that of the Clause of efficiency making the Education Department the referee as to what should be deemed necessary and sufficient accommodation. Years of work as a great teacher had apparently made Mr. Gokhale less ready to condone any lowering of educational efficiency than my friends. But my submission is that whatever be the standard of efficiency that is taken, and granting that the Departmental standard *can* be lowered, at least for a time, even then the additional cost will be sufficiently large to necessitate fiscal and financial readjustments of a serious nature. I am glad that some of my colleagues have tacitly recognized this in their different suggestions as to how the funds are to be found. As regards one of the suggestions—*viz.*, that the reform should be financed out of general funds and not by local taxation—I would only repeat the warning given by Mr. Gokhale in the Imperial Council: that so long as the money has to be raised by additional taxation, it is futile to differentiate between local and general funds. I may add that, on behalf of a local cess, distinct advantages can be claimed—such as the facility to touch certain resources that may escape a general tax, a fairer incidence and the possibility of local rates being spent locally within the sight of the contributors. As regards suggestions about retrenchment—on which my Non-official colleagues have warmed up—without becoming unanimous about any practicable plan—I would point out that some of the suggestions made are certainly either unremunerative or impracticable. It has been proposed that the Sanskrit College and the Department for the Publication of Sanskrit Manuscripts be done away with, in order to finance compulsory Primary Education. As one who has seen something of these very useful institutions, I would say that the ten or twelve thousand rupees that may be saved by their abolition would not go far in meeting the cost of the reform. A little while back, a colleague, Mr. Parameswaran Pillai, estimated that about six lakhs of rupees a year of *recurring* expenditure will have to be provided for if the measure is carried out in its fulness. And this was a moderate estimate. Another suggestion made today is that the necessary funds should be found by the suppression of the State Charitable Institutions. On the feasibility of this proposal, my friend the Head Sirkar Vakil appears to have much to say, and on the legality and equity of applying trust funds for other purposes than those intended originally.

Mr. Sesha Aiyar interrupting, said that the suggestion of the abolition of the Sanskrit College, and the Sanskrit Manuscripts Department had been made because *Non-official* Members in the Council had no means of knowing how much they cost the State. They were now given no opportunity to discuss or criticise the details of the State's Budget. Had they the power to do so, then better suggestions for retrenchment would have been made.

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Mr. Rengaswami Aiyangar continuing said :—

I am obliged to Mr. Sesha Aiyar, Sir, for making his position and that of his friends so clear. I think I understand his point of view. Not only is the introduction of this "innocent" measure to be followed by financial readjustments of a violent and almost revolutionary character, incorporating many schemes that have been in agitation, for years, but it is to be preceded by constitutional reform enlarging the functions and powers of this Council ! The Bill is to induce an alteration of the constitution !

Turning to another point, Sir, it has been contended that the measure is intended to be enforced gradually, first one area and afterwards another being chosen to bring the compulsion Clause into force ; and the boys being taken first and the girls later and so forth. This sounds reasonable. I was prepared also for the argument, which I have not yet heard today, that by proceding in this gradual manner the normal development of the State's revenue will keep pace with the increased expenditure on Primary Education. But is this more than plausible? If one considers the remarkable homogeniety—from an educational point of view—of most of the inhabited parts of the State—a homogeneity that has been apparent to everyone dealing with our educational administration—and if he considers also the persistent and clamant demand for more schools and more accommodation in existing schools, then the impossiblity of differentiating in practice to any appreciable advantage between locality and locality, within the State, would be quite obvious. It has been suggested with unanimity by Mr. Kesava Pillai and his supporters that the law need be brought into force only in certain selected areas, which would be easy to choose. They have made no suggestions as to the localities where a beginning is to be made. I am sure that, were they asked to make the selection, they could hardly do so without provoking complaints—in the papers, in the Assembly *etc.*, of preferential and differential treatment of area and area. Especially, if mass education is to be had for nothing *i. e.*, without a local rate, then if Quilon is the place where the law is first put into operation, Kottayam and Nagercoil will insist that *their* claims have been unjustly ignored in favour of Quilon. The differences in educational inclinations and availability between class and class, caste and caste, creed and creed, and above all between boys and girls in our State—are not so very wide as they are in British India or even in Mysore. I content therefore, as against the facile assumption that the measure proposed is capable of being introduced *gradually* within our State, that it *cannot* possibly be so very gradual, and in no case can it be gradual enough to be financed by the normal increment in the State's revenue. If we are to enforce the measure at all, I take it that we shall have to do it almost all over the State *at once*, and apply it nearly as soon to the education of girls as to that of the boys.

On these grounds, I consider, Sir, that if the Bill is to be really operative and to prove helpful in spreading mass education, it should not, in fairness and in candour, have been presented in its present truncated form, without the *essential* financial Clauses. It is surely invidious that the Mover should suggest the expenditure but forbear, even today, from the logical issue of suggesting the proper financing of the Scheme, and leave it to the Government to face the odium of raising the necessary funds by taxation, or by retrenching in unprofitable and unpopular ways—such as the suggested curtailment of public works for which there is increasing demand in detail every year all through the State, without so much as the offer of concurrent Non-official support for any additional taxation or of any well thought out and *really* practicable plan of retrenchment.

There are also other points, in the present Bill, which I find it difficult to accept, but I will not take up the time of the Council today with their consideration. To my mind, it is sufficient that the proposed Bill, if adopted in its present form will remain *ineffective* and *inoperative*. Travancore has all along held a coveted place in India for educational progress, and the auspicious reign of His Highness the Maha Raja has seen vast strides taken in such advance. There has not hitherto been any instance, in the State, of any great reform that was accepted in principle and not carried out, and of any receding after taking a forward step. That this has been so has been due to the care with which the consequences—even the remotest of reforms have been thought out before the measures were initiated. And in a matter of such cardinal importance as *mass* education, Travancore, which has admittedly been doing so much for education, and which *has* a prestige to lose by any mistakes it may commit, cannot afford to take a false step or to move backwards. And my submission is—and I believe I have with me the opinion of many responsible educational men both here and outside the State—that such evils are inevitable if the present Bill is passed through any hesitation in opposing it on the ground that its aim—the spread of mass education—is an excellent aim.

On these grounds, Sir, I beg to associate myself with Mr. Subba Aiyar in opposing the *present* Bill.

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Mr. Richardson thought that the Bill was not, under existing conditions, quite practical. He said that, if Elementary Education were to be made compulsory, the scheme would have to be extended to the whole area of the State and that, for that purpose, a large number of schools would have to be immediately started. Such a large initial outlay, he feared, would interfere with the ordinary demands of other Departments that had necessarily to be met. He also thought that there was actually no need for compulsion, as the difficulty at present was to find accommodation in the schools for the pupils who sought admission. He, therefore, supported Mr. Subba Iyer's motion.

Mr. Kesava Pillai made the following reply :—

In meeting the objections of Messrs. V. Subba Aiyer and K. V. Rengaswamy Iyengar, I have in the first place to point out that it is a mistake to institute a comparision in this matter, between British India and Travancore. Travancore is only a very small place when compared with the vast British India. Take a district in British India and compare it with Travancore. It is said that the percentage of literates in British India is less than what we have in Travancore. What is the percentage of literates in Burma? It is far greater than the corresponding percentage in Travancore. You see from this a comparison between British India as a whole and Travancore in these matters is misleading.

I have to point out, Sir, that it is a mistake to say that I admitted at the time I sought for permission to introduce the Bill, that my Bill did not contemplate the necessity to start more schools in the State. I have made no such admission. All that I stated was the Bill was on the lines of the Mysore Elementary Education Bill and, if my memory can be relied on, I even read out a copy of that Bill in the Council on that occasion.

From the discussion of the Official Members I see, after all, that they agree with us in thinking that there is necessity to introduce compulsion and the Government's position as I have shown from the Administration Report for the year 1088 is also the same. To be clearer the principle of compulsion is accepted by the Government and they plead want of funds to introduce it. Mr. Rengaswamy Iyengar says the Bill would have been acceptable to the Goverment if the Bill had financial clauses. Mr. Rengaswamy Iyengar is complaining that the Non-official Members have no concurrent plan whereby funds could be found for working the Bill. My only reply is we are not here to submit a concurrent plan like the one Mr. Rengaswamy Iyengar wants. Each one of us has suggested several ways and means for finding funds for the purpose. We have no control over the Budget and if the suggestions offered by us are accepted, I am sure adequate funds would be forthcoming. As I suggested in my speech, if the high ideal aimed at in the Education Code regarding school buildings is not insisted upon, and if the Education Department will be satisfied with modest and humble buildings, there can be a great saving in this direction. Now, to put up a building according to the requirements of the Education Code a sum of Rs. 1,500—2,000 is required. Accept my suggestion, the cost per building might not exceed Rs. 500. Look at the large sum that can be saved. There are several other ways whereby funds could be made available. On behalf of my Non-official colleagues, I can assure you, Sir, we shall not object to the imposition of any tax, like the income-tax or other similar taxes, if, after a careful handling of the finances, it is found that more funds are required to meet the general expenses of the State by making Elementary Education compulsory, but we are against the imposition of any education cess for this purpose. My learned friend Mr. Parameswaran Pillai, if I understood him correct, never advocated the imposition of any education cess as Mr. Rengaswamy Iyengar would have it. All that he said was, if the Government are of opinion that funds are not available, he has no objection in Government resorting to, as a last measure, any special tax, like the income-tax. This is exactly our position. Do not ask the land owner to pay any special cess nor levy a cess for education. Introduce the income-tax or some similar tax to meet the general expenses of the State if a necessity is felt for it. As for the omission of the financial clauses in the Bill, which has evidently displeased Mr. K. V. Rengaswamy Iyengar and which makes him think that the Bill is inoperative and ineffective, I have only to ask him to remember that Elementary Education is already free in Travancore. Yes, Mr. Gokhale's Bill provides for a cess and education is not free in British India. There is no necessity in Travancore to introduce a financial clause as education is free.

Mr. K. V. Rengaswamy Iyengar fancies that, if particular areas are selected for the introduction of the Bill, it would create discontent. It is a difficulty more imaginary than real. Nobody who has known the Travancoreans would say that they have this vice in them. If for instance education is made compulsory to begin with in Quilon, I can assure this Council, the whole Travancore would welcome it and not as Mr. Iyengar would have it that Trivandrum would quarrel with the Government. This objection does not deserve any further comments.

Mr. Iyengar further thinks that the Bill as it is, is impracticable and inoperative and he says, he has therefore to oppose it. How is the same Bill practicable and operative in Baroda, Sangli and Mysore. In this connection I have to point out, Sir, my learned friend Mr. Subba Aiyar is not correct when he says that the Bill does not produce satisfactory results in Baroda. A glance at the latest Administration Report would convince any one how encouraging the results are. We have now in Baroda a school in every village where 15 boys can be gathered together. The object of the Government of Baroda is to provide with a school every village consisting of 100 souls. The age limit of children who have to be compulsorily educated has also now been raised from 10 to 12. I learn from a reliable authority that the Government of Baroda are even supplying food and clothes to children with funds realised from the fines imposed for the infringement of the provisions of Elementary Education Bill.

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I have also to point out that Mr. K. V. Rengaswmy Iyengar is making a mistake when he says that I said at the time permission was sought for to introduce the Bill that all schools in the State are not well attended and are deserted by the people. I do not know where he got this information from. Those of you who were here then know that I never made any such statement.

The figures I have quoted to show what amount is now really spent on Elementary Education are challenged. It is on the authority of Dr. Bishop, the Director of Public Instruction, that I rely on these figures. The Government clearly admit the principle of compulsion. Now it is the duty of the Government to find out funds for introducing it. I say people will welcome this measure. I would request you gentlemen therefore to vote for my Bill.

Before taking the sense of the Council, the President made the following remarks: —

In closing the debate, I shall make a few remarks. We have listened to a very interesting and instructive discussion on Mr. Kesava Pillai's Bill. My Official and Non-official colleagues have discussed the Bill with considerable ability and earnestness, and I believe that every thing that could be said both for and against the Bill has been said.

The difficulty in Travancore lies not in inducing parents to send their children to school but in providing accommodation for the boys who seek admission in schools. The most unpleasant task which the officers employed in the Education Department have to perform in the beginning of every school year is to refuse admission to children for want of accommodation in the Educational institutions. Every Departmental school is crowded. The Government are opening additional schools every year. In the current year, the Government have resolved to open one-hundred new Elementary Schools. You have seen from the statistics referred to by the learned Head Sirkar Vakil that the percentage of literates in Travancore is higher than in all other Native States including Baroda and Mysore, where a system of compulsory Elementary Education exists, and British India. The number of schools in a given area is also larger in this State than in other Native States except Cochin where, as Mr. Subba Iyer stated, special conditions prevail. With reference to the amount spent on Education also, Travancore takes the lead. The amount allotted to Education in the current year's Budget is, in round numbers, 18 lakhs which constitute about 12 per cent of the gross revenue. This percentage is higher than the corresponding percentages in Baroda, Mysore and other Native States. About 10 lakhs out of this amount of 18 lakhs is devoted exclusively to Elementary Education. The goal of the Government ought to be and is universal free Primary Education in the State. As you are aware, Primary Education is already free in Travancore. I would earnestly ask my Non-official colleagues to believe that the interests of the Government in the matter of universal free Primary Education cannot be inconsistent with, and are not in any way different from, the interests of the people. I am very glad to note that my Non-official friends in this Council fully recognise this, as is clear from the speeches we have been listening to this morning. The difference between the Government and my Non-official colleagues is only with reference to the routes that lead to the goal already mentioned. The Government realise that it is impossible to enforce compulsory education without fresh taxation. My Non-official colleagues also, I am glad to observe, realise this difficulty, but with the exception of my friend, Mr. Parameswaran Pillai, they dare not face the situation boldly and agree to the imposition of new taxation. Whether the Government should introduce compulsory education by imposing an educational cess, is not a question for consideration before the Council now. It is worthy of note that a special feature of Mr. Gokhale's Education Bill was the imposition of an educational cess and that he emphasised this point in his speech in the Imperial Legislative Council. It is also worthy of note that many of the local bodies in British India which supported Mr. Gokhale, agreed to the levy of this cess. Mr. Kesava Pillai and my other Non-official colleagues in this Council are against an educational cess but would find the requisite funds by what they call a re-adjustment of the State finances. I regret that the Government cannot see eye to eye with my Non-official friends in this matter. The Bill, if passed into law, is bound to remain a dead letter in the Statute Book. In these circumstances, I think it is better that the Council rejects the Bill.

The Bill was then put to the vote, and, as the majority of the Council were against it, the Bill was rejected.

THE SUCCESSION CERTIFICATE BILL.

Mr. Subba Iyer, in introducing the Succession Certificate Bill, said that the absence of a Succession Certificate Regulation had of late been very much felt, as, in the case of a disputed heirship, the parties were referred to a regular suit which entailed heavy expense and delay. He therefore proposed that the principle of the Bill be affirmed and that the Bill be referred to a Select Committee.

Seconded by Mr. Sesha Iyer.

Mr. Parameswara Menon observed that the difficulty experienced owing to the absence of a like that had been exaggerated, for Certificates of heirship were very rarely produced In his opinion there was ample provision in the Civil Procedure Code which provided that the debtor might in such cases proceed by an interpleader suit and deposit the money in Court. As there would be loss to the parties owing to the payment of a 2 per cent court fee on the subject-matter of the dispute, under Section 12 of the proposed Bill, and as the Courts would still adjudicate the rights of parties only in a summary manner, giving room to fresh litigation. Mr. Parameswara Menon said that, to his mind, no necessity for the new law had been made out.

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